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A N
I N Q U I R Y
I N T O T H E
R I G H T S
O F
F R E E S U B J E C T S ;

The Cases of the *British* Sailors and Common Soldiers
are distinctly Consider'd and Compar'd.

To which are added,

Reflections on the Fatal Tendency of Party Contention, Corruption, and the prevailing Degeneracy of Public Spirit.

L O N D O N :

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The Case of the
Common Solicitors
and Company

Reflections on the Law
of the Property of
Books, Copyright, and the
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LONDON

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THE PREFACE.

THE following Inquiry was prepar'd and design'd for Publication above two Months since: At which Time it would perhaps have made its Appearance more seasonably. But a Pamphlet being publish'd at that Time, intitled, *Miscellaneous Reflections upon the Peace, and its Consequences, in which the Regard due to Soldiers and Sailors is consider'd, &c.* the intended Publication was intirely laid aside, in the Expectation, that the main Intention, the setting the Hardships of the disbanded Soldiers in a just Light, might be accomplish'd by that Pamphlet. And when upon examining that Performance, our intended Publication was again resum'd; it was again suspended, by the Report in the Papers,

Papers, of his Majesty's intended Bounty in Behalf of the Soldiers.

If by the Candour of the Public, the Tract itself, such as it is, meets with a Reception in any Degree favourable, the above mention'd Considerations will account for its Appearance so late.

The Reflections upon party Contentions, which are now added, the Writer presumes to think are far from being unreasonable, however deficient they may be in other Respects. His sole Design in the Publication is, to induce a Temper of Decency, Sobriety and Candour; without which, if he mistakes not, the public Liberty cannot be preserv'd.

Mar. 49.

A N I N Q U I R Y I N T O

The Rights of Free Subjects, &c.

AT a Time, when the Return of Peace raises a general Expectation of returning Plenty; Security of Commerce; Reduction of Taxes; and every other national Advantage; it cannot but be regarded, by every good natur'd Man, as a Matter worthy some Attention, that the very Men, by whose Labour and Bravery, these invaluable Blessings have been procured, are, themselves, the only Sufferers in this general Prosperity, the only Mourners amidst national Rejoicings; and, by a Misfortune altogether singular, are reduced to want and wretchedness, by means of that very Peace, which they have restored to their Country.

It is hardly necessary, expressly to point out the Condition of the *British* Sailors, and common Soldiers, chiefly the last, as the Subject of these Reflections. While the Labours of other Men are made easy, at least supportable, by the Hopes of

some Acquirement, some little Advantage in prospect: These unhappy Men, after all their Distresses, as the End of all their Fatigues, have nothing to expect, but immediate inevitable Poverty; and that too attended, with every disgraceful and aggravating Circumstance. Or in other Words, the severe Labour of many Years, in the Service of their Country, must end, to all Intents and Purposes, as much to their Disadvantage, as if the whole Time had been consum'd, in the most dissolute Idleness.

That such is the Condition of these brave Servants of the Publick, is obvious at first Sight; and, that their Misfortune can have no Redress, but from the Justice and Compassion of their Country, is no less manifest. If all this be admitted, by what Name of Detestation shall we call that new-coin'd Piece of Cruelty, which endeavours to crush the last Hope of these unfortunate Men; to extirpate every Sentiment of Compassion in their Favour; and to load their Poverty, with Suspicion, Contempt and Abhorrence, by representing them, without any Distinction, as a Parcel of Thieves and Ruffians?

Whatever might be the Writer's Intention, yet, undoubtedly the Letter of the honest Countryman of *Berkshire*, published some time since, in the *General-Evening-Post*, cannot be cleared from the Imputation of this cruel Tendency. Several other no less candid Intimations have been given; and in order to set us upon our guard against our Defenders, we have been called upon, to shut our Hearts and our Houses, against the most distressed, and, if I mistake not, the most injured of our fellow Subjects.

In consequence of these wrong headed, these hard hearted Suggestions, the Sailors have already been stigmatised, with the Imputation of several Robberies, said to be committed by Men in Sailors Habits: This has been the Cant of every News Paper. I verily believe, if the Matter were canvassed, it would appear

appear to be very much, if not altogether, an unjust Aspersion. Thieving is not the Vice of Sailors. The unhappy red Coats, who are now arriving, by thousands, are coming to a Country, already prepared to suspect, and accuse them; to accuse, even before any possibility of transgressing. That this ungenerous Practicè is also, to the last Degree, impolitick, cannot, I think, admit of any Doubt. Raising a general Expectation in their Disfavour, prejudging Men to be bad, has a direct Tendency to make them so: For, by that Means, the greatest Part of that Shame, and the Fear of Reproach, which deters so strongly from bad Actions, is taken off: Crimes they would never otherwise have thought of, are pointed out to their Observation; and if, at last, Sailors and Soldiers should fall to plundering and stealing, they have this to say, in Mitigation of their Crimes, that they did no more, than fall into the Track, which their own Poverty, and the uncandid Caution of their Countrymen, seem'd to have destin'd them to.

The wisest Nations of Antiquity receiv'd their returning Soldiers in another Manner. They had their Share in the public Triumphs; were caressed, were prais'd and honour'd; were the first to partake of the Emoluments, and Relaxations of Peace, and the phantom Glory was conjur'd up, to make, at once, the noblest Acknowledgment of their past Services, and the strongest Incitement to future Atchievements. But, it seems a Conduct, the very reverse of this, is current Prudence in *England*: And, so far are we from acknowledging the Merit of our Soldiery, of either Element, so far are from paying them Honour, or lightening their Burthens; that they are mark'd out for publick Obloquy, even before their Arrival; and, a red Coat, or a Pair of Trowsers, the Badges of the bravest Fellows upon Earth, must necessarily denote a daring Villain.

If I am thought to animadvert too severely, upon those

those Intimations of Danger, which were only intended, to put People upon their Guard ; I must reply, that I hope and believe no more could be intended ; but the Consequence may extend, naturally, to what perhaps was never design'd, and become cruelly oppressive. The People in question, even the lowest of them, are much more accessible to Shame, and a Sense of Reputation, than is generally apprehended : And, as they are, many of them, conscious, that their Services have merited some approving Notice; it must cut them to the Heart ; it must break their Spirit, and suppress their Ardour, under any future Adventures; if they find themselves, and their Services, buried under a Load of unmerited Infamy. But this Consideration, tho' it has some, yet is it of the least Weight : That, which is of infinitely more Importance, is this ; that, of all Men in the World, the disbanded Soldiers are the most distressed, and destitute ; and stand in Want of the utmost Commiseration, and Indulgence from the Publick.

I can hardly suffer myself to believe, their Case can be overlook'd by the Legislature : But, if I might venture to suppose that possible, then it stands precisely thus ; Those among them, who have a little Honesty, must beg : those who have none, must steal ; or else all must starve. Of the two, Begging is less mischievous than stealing. But if these People are brought under a general Odium ; if the Sight of a Soldier must be avoided, as an undoubted Thief ; if they are thus secluded from their only honest Resource, the Charity of their Fellow-subjects : what remains, even to the best disposed of these poor Men, but a Necessity of Stealing ? 'Tis well known, that the Character of a Soldier has long been the most unpopular, of any in *England*, and is that, which meets with the least Compassion.

That, much is to be fear'd from Men so dissolute in their Characters, as many of the common Soldiers,
and

and some of the Sailors undoubtedly are ; that every thing is to be fear'd, from any Sort of Men, drove to Desperation by Want and Misery, as all the common Soldiers must be, I am very ready to admit. What then is to be done ? Does it not seem of the highest national Importance, to make some Inquiry ? What is due, in point of Justice, to these Men, considered as the free Subjects of a free Government ?

What may be due to them, in point of Generosity and Reward ; considered further, as the brave Servants of a benevolent and equitable Government ? And

What is due to the public Peace, and the Security of private Property, by setting them in such a Condition, as in Justice and Reason they ought to be ; and thereby making them fairly accountable to the Laws of their Country for their Deportment ? No Law can oblige a Man to starve.

Before I proceed, I must necessarily distinguish between the Case of the Navy-sailor, and that of the Soldier, which I have hitherto sometimes consider'd as one. Thus far they agree, they have both been in the Service of the Public ; are both thrown out of any present Employment ; and have both been recommended to the Hopes of Employment, and the good Will of their Country, as Thieves and Pick-pockets : But in every other Respect, the Disadvantage is infinitely on the Side of the Soldier.

In fact, the Hardships the Sailors had to complain of, are almost wholly at an End. When there happens a very great Demand of Seamen, for his Majesty's Service, as in the late War ; so many of them are necessarily engag'd in the Navy, as to inhance, very considerably, the Wages in the Merchants Service ; which are further augmented, by the additional Number of Hands, generally allow'd to all Merchants Ships, Colliers, and others in time of War ; besides a further advance to draw the best of

the Sailors into Privateers. In the Navy, pretty near the same Wages are allow'd, as are common in the Merchant-men, in Time of Peace : So, that the Navy-sailor has a valuable Consideration for his Service : tho' in this Respect, he is a very great Sufferer ; that, by being confin'd in the King's Service, he is depriv'd of the high advanc'd Wages, which the Merchants Sailor has the Benefit of : That is, he has but twenty three, or twenty four Shillings *per* Month, whilst the Merchants Sailor has forty Shillings or upwards. Thus far he is a Sufferer in Point of Interest. The Incommodity of a Man of War, as to Confinement, closeness of Lodging, Danger in the Time of Engagement, &c. is another Disadvantage. A Sailor in the Navy is plentifully supplied with Food, &c. so that, unless a Part of his Pay goes to his Family, he is under no necessary Expences ; and his very Confinement, in a great Measure, cuts off all Occasion of superfluous ones. Upon the whole, when he comes to be paid off, he cannot but have a considerable Sum to receive ; I mean, by way of Wages : I don't mention Prize-money, for that is a Contingency. With this, whether he be discharged at *Portsmouth*, *Plymouth*, or *Chatham*, the Sea opens to him a very easy Conveyance to his Home. No painful Land-journey ; no Plague with Passes ; no contested Settlement ; no Wife nor Children, to burthen his Return. But this is not all ; while he remain'd in the Navy, he was all the Time exercised in his own proper Business ; always a Sailor : and therefore he has not his Business to begin anew. If he chuses to go immediately into Employment, he may do it as well in one Port as another. In this Respect, every Port is his Home. No Certificate is ever requir'd, as to the place of his Settlement, nor any as to his moral Character. In a Word, he is under no Disadvantage by being a Stranger ; but, if he appears to be sound, Wind and Limb, his Character is

s compleat. Thus it appears, without going more minutely into the Inquiry, that, tho' a Sailor may be said, in some Sort, to be a Sufferer by serving his Country ; yet, upon the whole, he has as much Justice done him, and as much Regard and Tender-ness shewn to his Interest, as the Nature of the Case will admits.

The King's Sailor then is treated equitably ; and, upon his Discharge (unless he is impoverish'd by his Folly, which is not a Matter of publick Consideration) he is in a Way to go into his own Course of Business, with as much Advantage as he can desire. I must however add, that, as so great Numbers of them are discharged almost at the same Time, it may not be easy for all of them to fall immediately into Business. If the Reader will look back, and compare the above, with what his own Observation will suggest to him of the Soldiers Case, under similar Circumstances, he will immediately see the vast Disproportion.

Under the wise Administration of the late Lord *Orford*, all imaginable Regard was had to the Navy, as the Strength and Glory of the Nation. Thus the Nation was always kept in a Condition of exerting its proper Influence : But, it was a Maxim of that able Minister, from which he would never depart, that a War was not to be engag'd in, but under the last and most unavoidable Necessity. Has the Event of that war, out of which, God of his infinite Mercy, has delivered us, in fact refuted that Maxim ? However that may be, thus far is certain, that the Attention which was constantly had to the Navy, under his Administration, has been very successfully continued under the present. As the War advanc'd, redoubled Endeavours were happily exerted, to recommend the King's Service, to the Approbation of the Sailors. The providing regularly for their Pay ; the Care, as to their Provisions ; the Regulations,

as to the Prize-money ; the attending to their Petitions, when they were under any Grievance ; the giving Rank to naval Officers ; all these, as they were the wisest, and best judg'd Measures, have produc'd the happiest Effects : And, the Gentlemen concern'd in the Administration of the Marine, in all its Branches, deserve the highest Praises of their Country, that, by their Management, very great Part of that Disgust, which the Sailors had to the Service, is extinguish'd. The King's Service never was in the Reputation, never was entered into with so little Reluctance, as it has been of late.

The Prejudices against the Navy-service were so strong, so deeply rooted, that, I believe every thinking Man used to fear they were invincible ; and it was always considered as a Weakness in our Government, which might, one Time, or other prove fatal. The removing this Prejudice, in a great Degree, is so much national Strength gain'd ; and is worth some of the Millions the War has cost. That these Prejudices are actually vastly weakened, is very obvious to all, who are conversant with the common Sailors. Such are the blessed Effects of a mild and equitable Government !

Upon the Face of the Earth cannot be found, a Set of Men of half that Importance to any Nation as the Sailors are to this. In Peace or War, for Commerce or for Defence, they are inestimable. Very much has been done for them, and too much cannot. While the late War was constantly unsuccessful by Land ; while it remain'd in a Manner inactive at Sea, the Honour of the Nation languish'd to a very mortifying Degree : But, no sooner was our natural Strength put in Motion ; no sooner were a few naval Enterprises set about in earnest, and left to the Conduct of excellent, and well chosen Commanders, but the *British* Sailors shew'd what they were. They retriev'd the sinking Glory of their Country ; they re-establish'd

establiſh'd the Dignity and Importance of *Great Britain*: They did more in a few hours, towards reſtoring Peace, than had before been done in Years; and, in a Word, while they fill'd theſe Kingdoms with Joy, they ſtruck all *Europe* with Wonder.

But, it has prov'd that Kind of Wonder, which turns to Emulation. Ever memorable ought to be the Words reported of Maſhal *Saxe*, to the *French* Monarch; "That there was no being Maſter at Land, till he could make himſelf Maſter at Sea." The whole Maritime World ſeems to have taken the Alarm. Not a Prince, who can gain a Sight of the Sea, from any Part of his Dominions, but has fixed his Eyes and Attention upon the Sea. The *French* are made ſenſible of their Error, in not perfecting their Marine-force, before they ſet on Foot their ambitious Enterprizes. They ſeem even glad to purchaſe Peace, at the Expence of all their Conqueſts, to recover that falſe Step.

The admirable Vigilance of that Government is well known; whatever they undertake they go thro' with, and that expeditiouſly, and to the Purpoſe.

Sweden and *Denmark*, are intent upon enlarging and extending their Commerce. To this Purpoſe they are eſtabliſhing trading Companies, and giving all the Protection and Encouragement to Trade in their Power. The Royal Projector of *Pruſſia*, as the *Coup d' Eclat* of all his Schemes, ſets up for a Maritime Power.

Whatever may be the Pretenſions of theſe Princes, of Regard to their Subjects; or, with whatever Smoothneſs Edicts and Maniſeſtos may be pen'd; the Enlargement of Power is their Object. It is no longer a Secret in Politicks, that the Power of any Nation is to be eſtimated by the Riches or Revenues of that Nation: As again theſe are, chiefly by the Importance, Extent, and Succeſs of its Commerce;
Trade

Trade being a never failing Source of Wealth, as Wealth is of Power.

The natural Riches of Soil, Climate, or Mines, bear no Proportion to the Riches derivable from Trade. The *Spanish* Gold Mines of *America* are the noblest Possession, of the former Kind, in the World; and yet, perhaps, the Trade carried on, by the several Nations, at the Expence, or upon the Credit of those Mines, is productive of vastly more Wealth, than the Mines themselves produce to the immediate Possessors.

Of the many Disadvantages, brought upon the Nation, by the late War, it is none of the least, that all our neutral Neighbours have increased their Shipping to a prodigious Degree: What Effect this may now have, upon that important Article of our foreign Trade, is not for me to determine. In the meantime, our Stock of Seamen is encreased considerably by the War; and, by a particular Management of late, fallen into by the Colliery, it is in a Method of receiving a constant Accession. With this, the Strength of the Nation is also increasing: But then, as a very great Number of Seamen are, or will be discharg'd from the Navy; as a great Reduction of Seamen is, also, made from Merchant Ships, Colliers, Privateers, &c. as our Neighbours are got very considerably into the Business of Sea-carriage, perhaps, to the Diminution of our former Interest in it; and, above all, as the several Nations, above-mentioned, are pushing the Interest of Commerce and Maritime Power, with their utmost Vigour; does it not demand the strictest Care, that this Redundancy of Seamen do not overflow into other Countries; or degenerate into Land-men in our own? I shall only add, that one skilful Mariner, or Sea-artificer, lost to his Country, is a Jewel lost out of the Imperial Crown of these Realms.

I must beg my Readers Pardon, if I happen to have

have any, for this Degression; which, however, I would thus far connect with my main Subject, the Case of the Soldiers; in that it may serve to make appear, that, I pretend not to set their Services, in a collective Capacity, in any Kind of Competition with that of the Seamen. This, however, does not affect the Justice of their Claim, as the Nation actually made Use of them.

What then is due to the Soldiers, considered, as the free Subjects of a free Government?

And, upon this Question, which I can't help believing, of the very utmost Importance, I presume to think for myself, in the following Manner.

When I form this Proposition, the *English* Government is a free Government; or the *English* are a free People: In that, among other Things, is implied this Assertion; that, in *England*, the Right of natural Property is admitted, secur'd and supported, and that universally, and without any Exception whatever.

And here I cannot avoid making a Distinction. It by no means necessarily follows, that the Subjects of a free Government are a free People: For, in common Speech, the Term, *Free Government*, is often used, when no more is intended by it, than, that the Government, or States governing, are free as to their own Acts of Government; free from the Controul of an absolute Sovereign, &c. And, tho' this be the common Way of using the Term, yet is the Sense of it very loose and indeterminate: But a free Government, in a just Sense, as referring to the People governed, must necessarily imply the Freedom of all its Subjects, or the Government over a free People. For Example, The *Polish* Government calls itself, and is, I think in general, called a *free Government*. By which is to be understood, that the *Poles* are not under the absolute despotick Sovereignty of one Man. That the Nobles, Cities, &c. have their particular

ticular Privileges, which cannot be violated. That all these have Voices in their Diet ; and that without their Concurrence, no Act of Government is valid, &c. By virtue of this Constitution, it may be call'd a free Government in the former Sense ; but, if among the People, the Custom of Vassalage prevails, so as to destroy or abridge the Right of natural Property, they cannot be call'd, with any Propriety, a *free People*.

If I hold, or am possessed of Land, by such a Tenure as obliges me to any Kind of personal Service, tho' this is some Abatement of my Freedom, yet I may consider the Lands so held, as my Pay, or as a Satisfaction for my Labour. But if, only from the Circumstance of being born within the Limits of any particular Lordship, and the Son of a Vassal, a Claim is set up and supported, to the whole, or any Part of my Labour, I am then a Slave in such a Degree ; my Right of natural Property is denied ; and it cannot be said of a Country where such Usages are supported by the Laws, whatever may be the Form of the Government, that they are a free People ; or the Government, in a strict Sense, a free Government.

By natural Property, I mean the Right which a Man has in the Effect or Produce of his own Labour. This simple Property is, of all others, the most important, and cannot be violated. Usurp'd upon it may be : But, however suppressed, or borne down, by whatever Establishment of Law or Power ; the Right itself will still remain, and cannot be expunged. So far as any civil Establishment admits, and protects this Right, so far is it just and equitable ; and in such a Degree as it controverts, or oppresses it, in the same Degree is that Establishment slavish, oppressive, and tyrannical.

The very Notion of Government, or civil Establishment, admits, and supposes a Restraint upon
natural

natural Liberty; and, to the End of the World, it will not be determined precisely, what Limitations it ought to have; or whether those Limitations are best adjusted under this, or that Form of Government. But the Right of natural Property is a self-evident Proposition. It may be borne down by Power, but never can be contested by Reason. 'Tis as much a Man's own, as his Life is his own. 'Tis a Right antecedent to any civil or social Obligation, deriv'd from God alone, the Creator of natural Powers and Faculties; and, to remove it still further from any Impeachment of human Laws, I might almost venture to add, 'tis the Right of the mere Animal, even prior to any Consideration of it as Man, or a human Animal.

The Essence of Slavery consists in this, that it is a Denial of the Right of Property a Man has in his own Labour.

The Property I have in my Horse, is, strictly speaking, Property in, or arising from, the Labour of the Horse; so Property in the Slave, is ~~the~~ Property arising to the Master from the Labour of the Slave: And, agreeably to this, a Slave may be defin'd; an Animal supported and kept to Labour, for the Use and Profit of his Keeper; (and the same general Definition agrees to a Mule, Horse, or any other Beast of Burthen) to the total Subversion of Reason, Nature and Truth.

If I were demanded, why I preferr'd the *English* Constitution to any other? I should reply, without any Hesitation, because, by the *English* Laws, the Right of natural Property is better secur'd and protected, than by any other. I cannot recollect any Instance where it is impugn'd, unless it is a little borne hard upon, in the present Case of the Soldiers, as I think I shall make appear; and perhaps, in some Degree, in the Case of the Imprisonment of the insolvent Debtor: For, upon the Supposition, that all
his

his civil Property of every Kind, as Lands, Goods, &c. in Reversion, as well as in Possession, is passed over to the Creditor; (for, till that be done, his Person is to be considered as a Pledge or Pawn, and so is justly detainable :) upon the Supposition too, that he is not considered as a Delinquent, or Criminal, and his Imprisonment as a legal Punishment; for then it is out of the Question: I then, with great Submission, apprehend, his Imprisonment is a Suspension of his Right of natural Property, and approaches a little too near a Species of Slavery. I say Species of Slavery; for, to make it compleat Slavery, his Labour must be usurp'd by another. But his Time and personal Freedom being his own, what he has a natural Right to, this I think he cannot be depriv'd of: He cannot justly be made an unfree Man, but only as a Delinquent or Malefactor; and I think I am right in saying, the Law does not consider him as such.

But, however that may be, the Constitution, or System of *English* Laws, always regards the natural Property, which every Man has in his own Labour, as sacred and inviolable; and it is this, more than any other Consideration whatever, that sets the *English* People in a State the most opposite to, or distinct from Slavery, and makes them a free People.

For, admitting the political System of King, Lords and Commons to remain as it is; and that the several Rights of the Electors of Members of Parliament, as Freeholders, Free-Burghers, &c. were also to remain: In that Case, the Government might be a free Government; free within itself, free as to its own Acts. A Government invested with many noble Liberties, and the People represented; the Freeholders, &c. possessed of many important Privileges; yet, if the Bulk of the common People, or indeed any Part of them, were by the Laws, or legal Customs, depriv'd of their Right of natural Property, were not
free

free of their Labour, but might be constrain'd to yield their Labour, in whole or in Part, without any or a just Compensation: They would then be in a State of Slavery, in a certain Degree, respecting the Degree in which their natural Right was usurped; and tho' it might be said, there is Freedom in *England*, or Part of the People are free; yet it could not be affirm'd, the *English* are a free People.

The Admission of this simple, natural, equitable Proposition into the Constitution, that every Man has a Property in his own Labour, which must not be violated; is that which makes it, strictly speaking, a free Government.

A free Government cannot be defin'd, a Government which brings no Restraint upon natural Liberty; for, in that Sense, no Government is or can be free. But a free Government is that under which the Right of natural Property is free and inviolate, where every Man is considered as free of his own Labour; and this Right, firmly establish'd, and tenaciously defended by Laws, whatever may be the Form of the civil Establishment, or Method of enacting and executing its Laws, constitutes a State the reverse to Slavery, and is Freedom.

It is this which makes the firm, the solid, and immovable Basis, of the *British* Liberty. 'Tis the Foundation-stone, remove it, and the whole Structure falls; impair it, and the whole is in constant Danger of falling.

That the Violation of any civil Right does not, nor can bear any Proportion of Evil or constitutional Danger, with the least Infringement of this natural Right, is very manifest.

If, by any Act whatever, suppose of the Royal Prerogative, the Right of Voting for Representatives in Parliament, for any Borough, *Harwich*, we will say, should be totally abolish'd; this would be the very highest Infringement of civil Right, that any
Englishman

Englishman could suffer : But, notwithstanding this Violation, the *English* would still be a free People ; and these very Men, the depriv'd Voters, would still be free Subjects. That is a Burgefs, a Voter at *Harwich* would, after his Deprivation, be only, as if he never had been possessed of that high Privilege. In a Word, he would be in the same Condition as to Freedom, Property, Laws, &c. with his Neighbour, who never had such a Right ; never was a Voter, who yet cannot be denied to be a free Subject.

But now suppose, that, by the same Act of Power, confirmed by the Laws, a Claim was set up and maintained, to the Labour of these Men of *Harwich*, without any, or a just Compensation. Slavery is then introduced ; the Right of natural Property is denied by the Laws, and it could never after be affirmed, The *English* are a free People ; nor the Government, in which Idea is included the Laws, &c. a free Government ; because this Instance of the Slaves of *Harwich*, would always be an Exception.

The *English* Constitution is the best in the World ; and the civil Rights of *Englishmen* are the most important that any People in the World are possessed of : But no Man will say, that, in the Term *Free Government*, in which Idea, in a strict Definition, the Freedom of all the People governed is included, or else 'tis only a Government free in Part : No Man, I say, will affirm, that, in this Idea, is necessarily included, that particular System of Government which is established in *England* ; because many other Systems of Government may be, at least imagined, no less free.

But, whatever System of Government is imagined, this Proposition, That every Man is free of his Labour, is necessarily included, if it is affirmed to be a free Government ; or else it fails in the Definition.

The specific Difference between a free Subject and a Slave, is precisely this.

The

The Right of natural Property is denied to the Slave.

The Right of natural Property is confirm'd, and secured, to the free Subject.

A free Government, considered in Reference to the People governed, is that, which admits and supports the Rights of ~~the~~ natural Property, and considers all its Subjects as being free of their own Labour, without any Exception.

A Government which contests, denies, or oppresses that Right, is an Establishment of Slavery; is oppressive, unnatural, tyrannical, in a Degree proportionate to the Extent of such Establishment.

The firm Establishment of this first Principle, Every Man has a Property in his own Labour, which must not be violated; or no Man must be a Slave in any Degree, is precisely the Basis of the *English* Liberty. The civil Establishment of King and Parliament forms the best Guard and Protection, the Wisdom of Man can invent for the Safety of this noble Structure. Nature, Reason, and Truth, all concur to give it Solidity. The Practice of these, or Virtue, is that alone which can give it Permanency.

From this natural Right is deriv'd civil Right, civil Property. Tillage, Trade, Manufactures, Commerce, all rest upon this one grand first Principle, The Right of natural Property. Take away this, introduce Slavery, and all languish for a Time, and then expire.

Thus every Individual becomes interested in, or has his own proper Interest inseparably connected with, this most righteous Constitution.

The Day-Labourer, who came to work in the Morning, had then nothing he could call his own, but the sorry Clothes that cover him. But he is a free Subject; he has Right of natural Property. His Limbs, Faculties, &c. are allow'd to be his own Limbs, Faculties, &c. which is deny'd by Slavery.

The Application of those Limbs, &c. to Labour, is his own Labour; and in Acknowledgment of this, that it his own Labour, he receives at Night a Shilling. Which becomes as much his own Property, or the Shilling is as truly his own, as the Limbs, Labour, &c. are his own; and thus he becomes possess'd of a civil Property. This Shilling, which he receiv'd in exchange of his Labour, is again to pass in exchange of some real Good, as Food, Drink, Clothing, &c. Now this cannot possibly be done, without his acknowledging, or acquiescing in, the whole System of civil Rights; the very Shilling, the Piece of Money, receives its Stamp, its determinate Value, its Currency, from Laws, or civil Establishment. The Government, which secures him this important Right, he helps to support; because he cannot exchange his Shilling for any Commodity, but that either directly, or indirectly, is under some Taxation. Thus all Truths are kept inviolate; every thing is acknowledg'd to be as it is; and the meanest free Subject becomes as much bound by Duty, Interest, and every Obligation, to support a Constitution so Just and Equitable as the Richest; his all, his all of Freedom and Property, bearing the same Relation to him, as the *all* of the Richest.

This is Freedom: This is a Constitution indeed worth preserving; this is the *British* Constitution.

That the Laws consider this primal Right, this Right of natural Property, as sacred and inviolable, we need but open our Eyes to be convinc'd of. All are free; and the Law does not suffer any Power whatever to invade it. Men chuse what Business they please, and make what Advantage they can of their Time, their Labour, their Art, or their Studies. They practise these when, and where, and how they please; the Law brings them under no Constraint. Indeed, if by Combination a Set of Men, Manufacturers for instance, should endeavour to advance

vance unreasonably the Rate of their Wages, the Law would justly interpose. The Law is then to be considered as Umpire, between Master and Servant; it always decides equitably, but always with a particular Tenderneſs, of the Right a Man has in his own Labour.

Even the natural Authority of a Father over his Son becomes restrained, by the *English* Laws, to cut off all Poſſibility of any real, or even ſeeming Abufe of it, to the Diſadvantage of his Freedom. Thus when a Youth is bound Apprentice to any Trade, he is permitted by the Laws to article for himſelf; and his Act is legal, tho' it is perform'd in his Nonage, and at a Time of Life when no other Act of his is ſo. By his Apprenticeship his Right of Property in his own Art or Labour, during a certain Term, is made over to the Maſter. In Satisfaction, as an Equivalent for this, he is preſum'd to learn that particular Art or Buſineſs. But if, inſtead of ſeven Years, he ſhould be drawn into Articles for fifteen or twenty Years, it would be an Invaſion of the natural Right; it would be Slavery for that limited Time, and the Law would never allow ſuch a Contract.

To put at once the ſtrongeſt Caſe that can happen. Some certain Man, ſome Labourer ſuppoſe, is indebted to me in a conſiderable Sum of Money, more than the whole Value of his Labour, during his whole Life, can poſſibly amount to. The Sum he is in no Capacity of paying, nor ever will; he has no Effects, &c. Upon this, I bring him under as ſtrong an Obligation as can be invented, to render me any Kind of Labour I ſhall ſet him about; neceſſary Food and Clothing to be allowed him; but, as to any Pay or Wages of any Kind, that is to be placed to the Account of the Sum he is indebted, and he is not to receive any; and this is to continue in Force to his Life's End. Here it is to be conſidered, that this Man is of full Age, and Soundneſs of Underſtanding; that

his Act is deliberate. It is farther to be considered, that my civil Right, my Debt is at Stake, and can't have any other possible Way of receiving any Satisfaction ; yet so admirably, so divinely tender is the Law of the Subject's Freedom, that tho' it was the Man's deliberate Act, tho' my civil Right was at Stake ; yet it would consider the Contract, as putting the Man in a State of Slavery, a State in which he could acquire no Property; as having sold himself for a Sum given, the Debt ; and the Law would annul such an Engagement with great Indignation.

The common Notions, that Debts for Labour are to be first paid ; that Implements of Labour, Tools, &c. are not seizable for any Debt ; if they are just, are further Instances of the wise Tenderneſs the Law shews to the Right of natural Property. I pretend not to any Kind of Knowledge in the Law, but from very common Observation ; if I had, I doubt not many more Instances, and those much more to the Purpose, might be brought.

I must observe further, that a Capitation or Poll-tax, is a Tax upon Labour or natural Property ; and therefore the present Administration, with great Wisdom, have avoided it ; and that they have, ought to be regarded as an Instance of their Attachment to the constitutional Freedom of their Country.

After the Establishment of the Right itself, that which is next of the greatest Importance, is the Estimation or Value it is to be held in : And here again, to the immortal Glory of the *English* Laws, all is free, and the Value of Labour is left to a natural Adjustment, arising from Reason and the Nature of Things. Any legal Rule that could be establish'd, would be, in many Instances, oppressive, and bring that important Freedom under Restraint ; and therefore the Law, by an Equity never enough to be applauded, always avoids it.

The Country may be considered as the grand Store-house,

house, out of which the several Deficiencies in Cities, Manufactures, and Maritime Business, are from time to time replenish'd. The Commodity, Labour, is there as at its first Market; and let us see how it is disposed of. I believe the Reader will be struck with Admiration, at the Force of Reason and Truth, left to produce their natural Effects, when he has observed that excellent Order and Harmony, which arises from this Adjustment.

There are many Considerations which go to the Valuation of Labour; and it determines its own Value, in different Parts of the Kingdom, at a very different Rate: And yet, throughout the whole, with perfect Equity. Tillage, Nearness to Sea-ports, to great manufacturing Towns, advance the Dearness of Provisions, and of Course the Value of Labour: But where there is little Tillage, no near manufacturing Town, nor Sea-port, there Provisions are cheap, and the Value of Labour less.

London is constantly drawing from all Parts of the Kingdom; but chiefly from the poorer Countries, where the Value of Labour being low, tho' Provisions are proportionably cheap, yet, as the Manner of Living is hard, many flock up from those Countries to partake of the Luxury of *London*: And it may be observ'd among the Hackney Coachmen, Chairmen, &c. that they are chiefly *Welsh*, or from the distant northern Countries. Where Labour is cheap, the Labourer lives the harder; where it is dear he lives in the greater Plenty: So that the Amount of Profit, or clear Gain, is perhaps not very considerably more in one Country than in the other. In general, the nearer the Capitol the dearer are Wages. Not that *London* draws more, nor perhaps near so much, from the adjacent Counties, as from the distant ones; but those Counties having an easier Communication with that immense Market for all Kind of Provisions; the Value of Provisions is of

Course advanced ; and, by an Effect of natural Equity, the Value of Labour follows.

But let those other Considerations of great Tillage, Sea-ports, &c. obtain to a great Degree, and the Price of Labour shall rise, in a distant County, considerably higher than it is in one much nearer *London*. Thus the Rate of Labour is higher in *Norfolk*, a distant County, than in *Wiltshire* and several other Inland Counties, much nearer the Metropolis. The Reasons are, A great manufacturing City; the vast Tillage in that rich populous County ; and, above all, the many Sea-ports and great Number of Ships: For again, in the very next County, *Lincolnshire*, where the Tillage is much less, and little or no Shipping, ~~their~~ Wages are low, and Provisions cheaper. This, by the Way, is one Instance of the vast Importance of Manufactures, Tillage and Commerce: For as is the receiving, so of Course will be the expending ; more Manufactures, Commodities, &c. bought ; more Taxes, Excises, &c. paid.

A Peasant, or Husbandman, is a mere Labourer, a Person earning his Wages or Pay, by mere Labour, without exercising any Art: But, if he becomes Master of some coarse Art, as a common country Carpenter, Justice takes Place, and he has an Advance of Four-pence, or Six-pence *per* Day, above the common Rate of Labour, in Acknowledgment of that Art. Let him improve in Art, and become a Joyner ; Justice closely follows him, and he receives, or earns still more, for his superior Art. Let him advance in Art still, and become a curious Workman in the Cabinet-making-way; Reason and Truth are still with him ; his Master-art, or the Perfection of Art in that kind, is also acknowledged to his further Advantage. Thus are all the Springs of Industry, Ingenuity, and Emulation set at work ; and hence constant Improvements are daily growing in Arts, Manufactures, &c. all founded in Freedom!

all

all arising from Right of Property in his Labour, Art, Superior Art, &c. Slavery crushes all!

Besides this of Art, there is another Consideration, which is always of great Moment, and has the most decisive Influence of all, in determining the Value of Labour; and that is, the Circumstances of personal Hazard, or Danger, under which the Labour requir'd is to be transacted. For every Man being free of his Labour, all Compulsion and Constraint being deny'd by the Laws, and a perfect Freedom, as to Choice of Labour, establish'd; it necessarily follows, that the only way to engage Men in hazardous Employments, is to allure them by Interest, or the Assurance of Advantage.

A common Sailor is a Sea-labourer; a Person earning his Pay, by mere Labour, without practising any Art. If he learns any Art, as a Ship-Carpenter's, Sail-maker's, &c. that is allow'd him. If he is skil'd in Navigation as a Science; can keep a Journal, take an Observation, &c. that puts him in a Capacity of rising still higher, as to be Mate, Master of a Ship, &c. A Sea-labourer classes with a Land-labourer, each being Men not practising any Art: Their Labour is their all; and it is from among Men of that Rank on the Land, that the Sailors are drawn.

The Employment of a Land-labourer is a safe Employment, free from any personal Hazard; and on that account, and because it is artless, is equitably of the lowest Estimation. Now no free unconstrain'd Man would leave the healthful natural Employment of Husbandry, for the Fatigue and Danger of a Sea Life; if he does, Truth and Reason require he should be compensated; and so in Fact he is; the Earnings, in which is included his Victualling, or his being supply'd with Provisions, &c. exceeding the Earnings of a Country Land-labourer, even where that Labour is highest, by at least Fifty *per Cent.* that is, the common Seaman earns one Shilling and

Six-pence, or more, while the Landman earns but a Shilling. I speak much within compass, and this in Time of Peace ; in War, as the Sailor's Danger encreases, so does his Pay. And so on the Land, if the Labour requir'd brings the Labourer under any apparent Danger, as to Health or Life, it is always consider'd in the Advance of his Pay, or Wages: And of this, many Instances might be given. Thus does Justice universally take Place ; and the Wisdom of the *English* Laws appears in nothing more evident, than in this, that they leave all Labour to a free natural Estimation.

The Result of all is, that it universally holds true thro' all the Variety of Employments, thro' all the different Estimates of Labour, in different Parts of the Kingdom ; a Property is arising to the Labourer, bearing a most equitable Proportion to his unavoidable Expence, as Food, &c. to his Degree of Labour, of Art, or of personal Danger.

Thus we see the Right of natural Property is left in a State of the most perfect Freedom ; and a Power of acquiring civil Property in various Degrees, becomes universal and unlimited. If that Power of acquiring Property was deny'd, it would be Slavery ; if natural Property was limited as to its Value, it would be vast Oppression, and approach near to Slavery.

The Advantage in Point of Interest, which the Day-labourer, or Farmer's yearly Servant, (my Reader will observe, I set natural Property at its lowest Estimation) has over the Slave, besides choice of Master, of Employment, &c. which regards his Freedom simply consider'd, is precisely this ; there is resulting to the Servant, or Labourer, a certain Excess, or Surplusage, over and above what is necessary for his immediate Support. Otherwise, in Point of Interest only, he would have no Advantage ; the Slave being kept alive for his Service, as is a Horse, or any other

other Animal. Mere Labour, as I observ'd, is a Kind of Property of the lowest Estimation; and yet universally throughout the Kingdom, its value has so reasonable and equitable an Adjustment, as constantly to produce more than the immediate Demands of Subsistence require; I believe in general, to the Land-labourer about one third: And hence arises that Property, which is of such vast, such truly sacred Importance.

Thus our Labourer becomes possess'd of something he may call, in the strictest Sense, his own; and this he may either spend, or lay up; he may be a good Oeconomist or a bad; may be discreet, or indiscreet; may indulge in some little Pleasure, or not; may provide in Health, against Sicknes; in Youth, against the Wants and Infirmities of Age; may relieve a Parent, assist a Friend; may in his little Sphere be humane or churlish, generous or niggardly. And in a Word, from this one Principle, Right of Property in his own Labour, he becomes a Man, a free Agent, and a Member of Society.

Hence the happy Notion of a Country takes its Birth: 'Tis his Country; he becomes interested in its Welfare, Laws, &c.

Hence too arises that other delightful Idea of domestic Happiness; of a Home;

*Relations dear, and all the Charities,
Of Father, Son, and Brother!*

Milton.

In a Word, together with his animal Powers; his Reason and Conscience, his proper Manhood, is put into his own Possession; he is left to act upon his own Plan, and becomes what his Maker intended he should be, Free, celestial Liberty, such are thy Benefits.

Thus does every Good, whether Natural, Moral, or Civil, become universally diffusive. And a well established Government, thus extensively Free, or

extending its Freedom and Protection to all its Subjects, without any Reserve or Limitation, bears at once the justest and noblest Resemblance of any thing human, to what we conceive of that infinitely perfect Being; who is good to all, and whose tender Mercies are over all his Works.

High civil Privileges make a dazzling Appearance: But it is not from them, not from the peculiar Privileges of any Member, or Members of a Commonwealth, that the Worth of Government is to be computed. The Cities, Nobility and Palatinates of *Poland* are possess'd of these to a very high Degree; and there the Justice and Liberty of their Government stops; it proceeds no lower; all under these are Slaves. That Government then is the best, which extends its Freedom, Benignity, and Justice the farthest; or to the most, the greatest Number of its Subjects; and that Government alone can be called perfect, which extends them to all, civil Privileges will in general naturally adjust themselves in an Order, corresponding to the Rank of the several Members of a State. Thus the Peers, the highest Rank of Men in *England*, have the greatest civil Privileges; so that we may pretty safely conclude, if the Rights and Interest of the lowest Rank of People are secur'd by any Government, those of every other Rank are secur'd of course. If the Laws will take care of the Poor, the Rich will generally find the Means to take care of themselves. Under this View of Things, let us bring the Merit of the *English* Government to a fair Detection; and to that Purpose, my Reader is desir'd to pass with me, in his Imagination, to some Village, in what Part of *England* he pleases; and in that Village, I undertake to shew him the *English* Constitution in its full Dignity; I had almost said Divinity.

That Cottage, with its Acre of Land, is the Freehold of an ancient Husbandman: This with a Cow,
and

and a little Money makes his whole Fortune.—But this Man of Estate, real and personal, how did he acquire it? What has been his Trade, Business, or Profession?—Labour: But no Trade, we know, can be carry'd on successfully, without Artifice, Stratagems, Schemes, and Projects. Upon what general Maxims did he act? What were his Arts?—Frugality and Temperance.—Surely then some able Protector, some powerful Friend, must have given him Countenance and Assistance; and under the Nurture of that Patronage, this feeble Fortune must have taken its Growth. Yes! in the Constitution of his Country he has found that indulgent Friend, that able Protector. That Constitution, by allowing him all his Rights; by acknowledging his Labour to be his own; by making him Free and Independent; by securing him from every Kind of Oppression; that has prov'd the Creator of his Fortune and Happiness. This Man may be truly said to sustain his Age, by the Vertues of his Youth; from that noblest Source, and the diminish'd Labour of his advancing Years, he supports himself with Decency and Comfort. And thus, when he has liv'd in Peace, in Health, in Simplicity, and Contentment, to a Fullness of Age; he will calmly sink into his last Sleep; “forget himself, slip into his Shroud, and rest for ever.”

And now, gentle Reader, go back again to Town; pass from the Court to the *Exchange*; take *Westminster-Hall* in your way; leave the Decision to simple Nature and Truth; and then tell me: Whether you can find one Estate, rais'd with half that Purity, or enjoy'd with half the Rationality, as our Cottage Estate? The truly noble Estate, of a Cottage and an Acre of Land!

I have attempted to make appear, that the admitting the Right of natural Property, or the allowing every Man whatever; without any Exception, to be free

free of his own Labour, is the true Criterion of a free Government.

That this Right of Property is actually allow'd, and in the most efficacious Manner secur'd, by the *English* Constitution, to every Individual; and that the least Invasion of this Right would be wounding the *English* Liberty in its first Principle.

That the Wisdom of the *English* Laws has left the Valuation of this Right in perfect Freedom.

That nevertheless a very equitable Estimate arises, from Reason and the Nature of Things.

All these, I think, may be collected and express'd in the following Propositions: That a free Subject of *England* has an undoubted incontestable Right of Property, in his own Labour. That his Compensation must be estimated by the Degree of Labour, of Art, or of personal Danger attending such Labour; and that to deny this, either in whole, or in part, amounts to a Denial of his being a free Subject.

We will now apply this Rule distinctly to the Case both of the Sailor and Soldier.

A Sailor in the Navy is a free Subject, having Right of Property in his Labour; it is allow'd, he has Wages; he acquires Property.

But a Sailor's Business is necessarily attended, at all Times, with personal Danger; that also is allow'd: His Wages are near the same, as the same Rank of Men, Sea-labourers have, who are free to make their own Bargains with Merchants, &c. in Time of Peace.

But in a War this Imployment, of itself dangerous, is still vastly more so, from Engagements, unhealthy Climates, &c. That also is allow'd: He has Prize Money, which seems an equitable Means of proportioning his Advantage to his Duty and Danger. Thus it appears, that his Rights are very justly regarded.

A Soldier is also a free Subject, having Right of Property in his own Labour. What Property does he

he acquire? What pay is secur'd to him, over and above his Subsistence, as a just Compensation for his Time and Service?

A Soldier's Business, in Time of War, under a Discipline necessarily very severe, is vastly laborious, harassing, fatiguing, greatly distressing, perhaps beyond any other. How is this allow'd?

His Employment is also to the last Degree hazardous, as to his Health and Life. What Consideration is had of that?

A Man, who labours; labours to excess, labours in a Course of infinite Difficulty and Danger, and yet acquires no Property by that Labour, comes under a Description, which Decency does not suffer me expressly to apply to any *Englishman*.

The Power a free Government may assume, to make use of the Services of any of its Subjects, does not, nor ever can, affect the Justice of their Claim to pay Wages, adequate to their Labour and Danger: Are they Servants, or are they to be ranked in the most ignominious Condition of human Nature? If they are Servants, they must be consider'd and treated as Servants; if they are not consider'd as Servants, then the Government employing them, and whose Subjects they are, cannot be said, with respect to them, to be a free Government. The Necessity of impressing Men into the Service, or of constraining their Continuance in it, if they enter'd voluntarily, has always been thought a Hardship upon them, consider'd as free Subjects: And so undoubtedly it is; yet the absolute Necessity of the Case excuses, or rather justifies, that high Act of Power. But surely it never can be pretended, that the Constraint brought upon their Persons necessarily infers a Right of usurping their Labour. This is very justly distinguished in the Sailor's Case; and a just Compensation is made ~~in such~~ for his Services. The several Workmen and Artificers of all Kinds, employed by the Public, have

have Justice done them to the full, for their several Performances: And in a Word, throughout the whole Establishment, for all the public Services, in all the public Offices, and thro' the Whole of the public Dealings, whether in buying or imploying, as cloathing the Army, victualling the Navy, freighting of Vessels for Stores, Transports, &c. I say, thro' the Whole of its Dealings, whether of purchasing or imploying, the *English* Government deals with the same Equity, as a private Man of the strictest Justice would deal. Why then must the Case of these unhappy Men, the Soldiers, be the only Exception to its Equity and Freedom? That miserable Subsistence which is allow'd them, under their constrain'd Service, cannot be said to be a Compensation for that Service: Nor does the Gayety of the Dress make the Matter any better; for subsisted and cloth'd the vilest Class of Men must be. The Question is, What Property is secur'd to them, as a just Compensation for their Labour? If it be said, most of them enter'd voluntarily, and received Money for their inlisting; that does not alter the Case. The Law does not permit any Man to sell himself, to sell his Right of acquiring Property, for any Consideration whatever: But if, after all, this Treatment must necessarily be right, because it is so establish'd; I must then reply, that Establishment must be consider'd as a mere Act of Power; and as such, Argument has nothing to do with it. But whatever may be pretended, to invalidate the Justice of their Claim, the Compassion due to their truly miserable Case, will surely never be disputed. Power itself, which will not be reason'd with, will yet sometimes be intreated; since that Act of Submission implies an Acquiescence in its Authority. Let us inquire then,

What may be due to the Soldiers, in Point of Generosity, or Bounty, consider'd as the brave Servants of a benevolent and equitable Government?

As it is the common Frailty of Mankind to idolize Power, and as every Idol, of every Kind, becomes a Model, or Exemplar to its Votary; we may constantly observe under tyrannical Governments, that the Slaves of Rank and Dignity become Tyrants in their turn: They fancy something Divine in that Power, under which they tremble; they assume it themselves, and exact the dreadful Homage of a trembling uncomplaining Servitude, from all their miserable Dependants. Thus the Temper of a Government diffuses itself into the Minds and Manners of its Subjects; and thus the mild and benevolent Genius of the *English* Constitution becomes apparent, in the Humanity and Kindness of the *English* Nation. Animated by this Consideration, upon the Benevolence of the Legislature, and upon the Charity of private Subjects, the unhappy Soldier throws himself, as his last and only Refuge.

Such and so extensive have been the Charities, and charitable Establishments, of late set on foot; particularly in *London*, that Men seem even glad to find Subjects for their Charity. Can a nobler Subject ever arise, than Valour in Distress? The Bravery of these Men, constantly unsuccessful as it was, never fail'd to extort Admiration and Applause, from those very Enemies, before whom they retreated, (for they never fled;) and will it have no Merit with their Country; Does it carry no Recommendation to the Hearts of *Britons*; that their Soldiers have brought off the Reputation and Glory of the *British* Troops, untarnish'd, unsullied, thro' infinite Difficulties, and under every imaginable Disadvantage?

As all other Virtues, so in a particular Manner is Courage founded in Freedom. The Notion of a Country whose Honour they are to assert; of a Home, in which they may repose in Freedom, after their Labour; this gives an Ardor to the free-born Soldier, which the Military Slave can never come up to.

Let

Let us inquire then, what sort of a Country it is to them, which these brave Beggars have been fighting for; and in what Capacity it places them, of arriving at their wish'd for Home.

Home is the Heaven of a poor Man; 'tis his Place of Rest: The Object of all his Wishes, and the Hope of some time arriving there, makes his chief Support under all his Labours; whether that Home be in the Deserts of *Wales*, or amidst the barren Mountains of *Scotland*; still 'tis his Paradise.

I don't know, that the Foot Soldiers can be said to have one single Penny secur'd to them, as Wages, or an Acknowledgment of their Services. Upon their being disbanded they receive a Pass, which limits their return to their Home, or Place of Settlement, to a certain Number of Days; and their Pay is allow'd them, for so many Days, as the Pass allots for their Journey.

Very many of the Foot Soldiers belong to *Wales*, and the farthest northern Counties of *England*, where the Value of Labour being low, recruiting is generally most successful: So that if a Regiment is broke in, or near *London*, the Soldiers of those Counties have a Journey to make, from a Hundred and Fifty, to two Hundred and Fifty Miles; as the Places of their several Settlements are, more or less, distant. If a Soldier, whose Settlement is in the County of *Westmorland*, has twenty Days allow'd him for his Journey; then his Pay, being five Pence, or, at most, Six-pence *per* Day, he has Eight and Four-pence, or ten Shillings at most, to support him. His Pass, which limits the Time of his Journey, does not permit him to work by the Way; nor is he suffer'd to Beg, or ask Relief: In either Case he becomes obnoxious to the Law. His only Means then, for the Performance of this Journey, is the small Sum of eight, or ten Shillings.

And

And here I cannot avoid observing, that this Man is still consider'd as being in the Pay of his Country, his Country's Servant, till his arrival at Home. His stated daily Allowance, his being restrain'd from working for himself, and his Pass, all regard him in that Light: His Country has the Whole of his Time. Upon this I must demand, is his Allowance proportion'd to the Pay of a free Servant, or is it not? If any Person had Occasion to send a Messenger into *Westmorland*, could a Man be found to undertake that Journey, on Foot, for Six-pence a Day? Could any be found to do it for two Six-pences, or for Eighteen-pence? I verily believe, not any free unconstrain'd *Englishman*, making a fair Bargain, would do it under two Shillings. I farther ask, Has any Man whatever, by the *English* Laws, a Right to constrain the Meanest of his Fellow-Subjects, to undertake an Employment for Six-pence a Day, which is reasonably worth three or four? And still farther, if, by mere Dint of Power, any Man was compell'd to accept these starving Terms, could that Man be said to be Free, or a free Subject?

In order to give the munificent Allowance, of Six-pence a Day, its full Weight, we will suppose, that our Soldier does not break into his Sum a single Penny before his setting out; that he is perfectly well provided with necessary Clothing, Shoes, &c. that it is impossible he should fall ill by the Way; that it is very proper a Man should be obliged to travel, tho' he were to make his Journey through Snow, or Water, up to his Chin. In a Word, we will admit all these, and many more un-supposable Suppositions, and inquire only, how our Soldier is to be subsisted, through this enormous Journey, with his intire Sum? If he is a single Man, I don't deny the Possibility of carrying his bare Bones to his Home; because, wherever the Night overtakes him, he has the Ground to sleep upon, without a Penny of Ex-
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pence;

pence ; and it must be own'd, that Water offers itself, at this Season, every where, in great abundance, for his Drink : And thus being well accommodated with Lodging and Drink at free Cost, his Six-pence may buy him as much Food, as will keep him from starving, during four and twenty Hours.

But if our Soldier has a Wife and a Child to share his Country's Bounty with him (and that is the Case with many of them) he might then as well undertake the Grand Tour of *Europe* with his ten Shillings, as a Journey to *Westmorland*. It must not be alledged, that if a Wife will follow her Husband into the Army, they both ought to starve. It is found very proper, upon many Accounts, to permit Women to follow the Camp ; and this very Admission implies their being some way or other useful. No Pretences are made of their meriting any Pay : But surely Humanity, if not Justice, demands their being at least subsisted to their Homes.

But to go on : We will suppose our northern Soldier, with his Wife and a Child, set out upon this Journey with their Stock intire : let them manage as frugally as they will, their whole little Substance must, unavoidably, be expended, before a quarter Part of their Journey can be compleated ; and what now must become of our miserable Travellers ? Money they have none ; they are not allow'd to work ; if they beg, a Bridewell receives them ; if they steal, the Gallows. If any Gentleman can suggest a Method of obtaining Food, and the Necessaries of Life, without either buying, or borrowing, or begging, or stealing, it would be of singular use, and he might have the Honour of passing for the ablest Projector of the Age. Our Soldier, I fear, will meet with no such Projector. What then can he do ? Starve.

Drove at last, by Distress, into Despair, he takes a Crown, or a Guinea, from the first Passenger he meets. A mighty Zeal appears to bring such a desperate

perate Villain to Justice : And so our Soldier receives from the Mercy of a Halter, what he could not obtain from the Justice of his Country ; Rest from his Labour.

And thus ends the nine Years Service of a free Subject, to a free Government ! I don't know that I have mis-stated any Fact ; nor have I strain'd, to extort any other Consequences, than what naturally follow, or may, at least, very probably follow, from such hard and oppressive Treatment : I speak of it in Terms much too soft. What Difficulties, what Hardships, what Distresses, are not brought upon these unfortunate Men ? What Absurdities, what Impossibilities, are not enjoin'd them ?—Set a Starving by their Country.—The Law of Nature does not suffer them to starve.—Reduc'd to Beggary by their Country.—The Laws of that Country do not permit them to beg.—Constrain'd to steal by their Poverty.—The Laws of their Country seize their Lives, as the Penalty of their Stealing.—Consider, *Britons !* in the Name of the Just and Merciful God, be intreated to consider, what it is you do ?—Does a Man of you travel, and can he subsist the Horse, that carries him, for Six-pence a Day ?—Can it be done, properly, for two Six-pences a Day ?—And shall it ever be said, that an *Englishman*, a Free-born, a Distressed, a Brave, perhaps an Honest, and Virtuous *Englishman*, had his Subsistence, his Life, held in no higher Estimation than a Beast ? But in half the Estimation of a Beast ? And that, not in a single Instance, but by Thousands ! by ten Thousands !—And that again, not by an Act of private Cruelty, and Oppression, but by the deliberate Sentence of his Country !—By that Country, in whose Cause he has stood all the complicated Horrors of War, undaunted !—By that Country, which has avail'd itself of the Labour of the best Years of his Life, unacknowledged !—By that very Country, in which he has Rights, that ought not to

be violated!—And is it thus the Rights of free Subjects are maintain'd? Is this the boasted Justice of the *English* Constitution? Is this the applauded Humanity of the *English* Nation? If it is, what Man, of common Benevolence, will not blush to own himself a *Briton*?—

This Treatment, at any time hard enough, is greatly aggravated by the Season of the Year, in which many of the Regiments are, or will be, disbanded. That the greatest Degree of national Frugality is necessary, is indispensably necessary, to the very Being or Existence of the State, is a Truth so obvious, that no one Man doubts it. Frugality is, to the *English* Government in its present Situation, the one Thing needful: The very speedy Reduction of the national Forces, and, of course, of the national Expences, has the Appearance of entering upon the Peace; with a Resolution of pursuing the only Means, by which the Nation can be preserv'd from total Ruin, reducing and abating the public Expences. But this Measure, so just, and prudent, with respect to the Public, augments, very considerably, the Misfortune of the disbanded Soldier, by turning him adrift in the Winter.

But as the Savings to the Public, thus made at their Expence, increases their Difficulties, it also adds some Weight to their Hopes of the public Bounty; since it seems to supply a Fund, a Part only of which, properly apply'd, would greatly relieve and mitigate their Distress.

The establish'd Provision for Gentlemen of Rank in the Army, by allowing them Half-pay, in Time of Peace, is perfectly equitable. And this Act of public Justice, or Generosity, does very strongly countenance the petitioning poor Soldier.

Many Gentlemen, of both Houses of Parliament, in the Cause of their Country, have been the Sharers with these unfortunate Men in the Dangers and Fatigues of War; and are authentic Witnesses, at once,

to

to their Bravery and Distresses.—May I be permitted to intimate, that any Relief to their Poverty, obtain'd in a parliamentary Way, whether it be consider'd as a Matter of Right, or of Bounty, would save the Honour of the Constitution from no inconsiderable Stain, and be an Act, that the united Voices of Justice and Humanity would loudly applaud.

Thus I have endeavour'd to represent the Case of the Soldier, as a Subject every way justly claiming the public Consideration. I am far from asserting, that every single disbanded Soldier is absolutely so destitute, as I have represented.—Many of those, who have been quarter'd at Home, may have some little Savings from Employment, or Labour, which, at Times, they may have been permitted to follow ; but this, to make the most of it, can be but very inconsiderable, and only regards a few Individuals ; and of those, who are, or have been, abroad, here and there a Man, by the Practice of some handicraft Trade, in the Camp, may have some little Money. The Advantages from Plunder, I believe, are not worth mentioning, and therefore I did not Balance it against the Prize-Money of the Sailors, to which it cannot bear any Kind of Proportion.—So that tho' a few Exceptions may arise ; yet, in general, as to vastly the greater Number of Soldiers it may be affirm'd, that they are no less destitute, than I have represented.—

The constitutional Benevolence of the *English* Government is so extensive ; the Humanity of the *English* People is so habitual ; that a Case of Distress need only to be justly represented, and a little attended to, to meet with Relief.—

There is yet remaining another Argument, which, tho' it does not immediately affect the Soldiers, yet it may have some Influence towards obtaining them Relief ; and that is, the Consideration of what may be due to the public Peace, and the Security of pri-

vate Property, by setting them in such a Condition, as, in Justice and Reason, they ought to be; and thereby making them fairly accountable to the Laws of their Country for their Deportment.

And here I shall take up very little of the Reader's Time.—If it appears that these Men, the Soldiers, have been, for many Years, in a constrained Service, in which they could acquire no Property: If it appears further, that they actually are not possess'd of any; that they are restrain'd from working, while upon their Journey, to acquire any, and that they are not permitted to beg: If too, their pitiful Six-penny Allowance is all unavoidably expended, before half their Journey be at an End:—How a Man, under these Circumstances, can become a Criminal, because he does not starve; and be justly treated as a Malefactor, for that, which, to speak in the softest Terms, is his Misfortune, invincible Poverty; must be left upon the Consciences of those, whom it may concern. I decline pressing this Matter any further.

That the Soldiers, upon their being disbanded, should be requir'd to repair to their several Places of Settlement, is certainly very right; it makes a proper Dispersion of them thro' the Kingdom; is a Means of preventing their being mischievous; and is, besides, fixing all of them, who mean honestly, in the very Place where they desire to be. But then this should be done equitably.

When they arrive at their Homes, it will not be easy for them directly to find Employment: Besides, a Man, who has been so long disus'd to his proper Business or Labour, cannot easily, however willing or industrious he may be, accommodate himself to it, for want of Practice: And herein the Soldier's Case differs widely from the Sailor's.

It is not for me to propose, nor for any Man to prescribe, a Remedy for these Grievances: The parliamentary Wisdom of the Nation, now in Action, is
alone

alone the proper Judge ; and that cannot be treated, by an *Englishman*, with too much Deference and Veneration. But if I might be permitted to wish aloud, it should be; that the disbanded Soldier should have a reasonable Time allotted for his return Home: Such I mean, as would make a proper Consideration for the Length of his Journey ; for Weather, and for Ways frequently unpassible, in this Winter Season. That he should, by his Pass, be intitled to receive from Time to Time, at different Stages on the Road, such an Allowance, as would be a decent reasonable Support for him on his Journey. And that, at the End of it, he might have a little Sum paid him. Something to subsist upon till he could settle to Work ; something that might acknowledge his Time and Labour not usurp'd ; something as a Reward, or Bounty, for his Service to his Country.—And if this were done, the Civil Magistrates and Peace Officers might justly be as vigilant as they pleas'd, to bring to Punishment any Depredations, committed upon private Property.—The *English* Government would save itself, (if my Notions are not altogether visionary) from a Stain, which never can be effac'd ; and a great Number of free Subjects, now struggling under Want and Misery, would, by this Act of Justice, or Humanity, be made easy and happy.—

It is to be fear'd, that any Sum, they might receive upon their being disbanded, would be intirely dissipated by too many of them, long enough before they reach their Home, and so no real good would be done by it. A Method of supplying them with Money, in the Manner mention'd, might, I presume, very easily be concerted, by means of the several Receivers of the Revenue: Their having something to receive, at the End of their Journey, would quicken their Dispatch ; and it would also, in a great Measure, secure their good Behaviour upon the Way.

National Oeconomy can never be more wisely
D 4 found-

founded, than in national Justice. If this Allowance should be extended to three, four, or five Pounds a Man, it could amount to no very large Sum, in a national Consideration; and very confident I am, no public Money ever was, or ever can be, more justly, more worthily expended.—

I cannot prevail with myself to take leave of the Army, without just mentioning the Case of certain miserable Appendages to the Army, and recommending them to the Compassion of private Subjects, and the Lenity of such Magistrates, and Parish Officers, as may have to do with them; and those are the Widows and helpless Infants of such Soldiers, as died, or were kill'd Abroad. Very many of these truly miserable People came over in the late Transports; several of their Passes, which I have seen, destine them to a Journey of two, three, or four Hundred Miles, in this dreadful Season. Many of them with a Child at the Breast, and one or two more in the Hand. The Law has made a very wise and tender Provision for the settled Poor; but the Case of the travelling Poor is very miserable. There is, indeed, some sort of Provision made for them; but it is cruelly hard to obtain, and, at the best, makes but a starving Subsistence.

Idle Vagrants and Vagabonds are, undoubtedly, the very Pest of Society, and can't well be dealt with too hardly. But it is not always easy to distinguish such, as are by Accident, or Misfortune, reduc'd to travel in Poverty, from such, as make it a Pretence, to live a strolling Life in Laziness. The unhappy People in Question, provided they keep the direct Road to their Homes, can't be consider'd as voluntary Strollers: 'Tis their unspeakable Misfortune, that they are in this State of Vagrancy; and they should be treated tenderly.—'Tis something to have lost a Husband and a Father, in the Public Service.

God only knows the Distresses of the Poor.—Let those,

those, who live in Ease and Plenty; let those, who are themselves Parents, reflect but a Moment, upon the exquisite Distress it would be to them, to be hunted from Parish to Parish, thro' a Length of two, three, or four hundred Miles, and that half starv'd, and perhaps more than half naked; in the Depth of Winter too, and their Children to share with them, in all the Hardships of this inhospitable Journey: Let them reflect but a Moment, upon this Case as their own, and then let them act to those, whose Case it actually is, as Nature and Humanity direct.—The tender, helpless, innocent State of Infancy and Childhood, is such a Plea for Compassion, as, surely, never can be resisted. I shall only add; the very Scraps of a plentiful House, a few cast-off Clothes, or any little Act of Bounty, properly apply'd, to the Relief of these miserable Wanderers in their several Stages; would bring upon the Donor the Blessings of them, that are ready to perish, and make the Widow's Heart to sing for Joy.

And thus I leave the Case of the Soldiers, and all that relates to them, with the Justice and Mercy of their Country. I have no other Connection either with Sailor or Soldier, than that common one of Humanity, by which all Men are Brethren; and that Band of civil Union, by which the Rights of the poorest *Englishman* are as dear to me as my own. As I am a Man, I feel.—As I am an *Englishman*, I speak what I feel, and what I fear.—What I feel for the Distresses of these unhappy Men, and what I fear for the Honour of my Country.—

A bad Advocate is, perhaps, better than none: My sole Intention has been to give, what appear'd to me, the Grievances of these Men, a Voice: If their Country will give that Voice a candid Hearing; artless, and ill-conducted as the Plea may have been, the Merit of the Cause, surely, cannot fail to procure them some Redress.—

In the Course of this Inquiry we have been perpetually induc'd, by the Force of Truth, to applaud the unbounded Equity and Humanity of the *British Constitution*. We have seen the tender Care it has of the Rights of the lowest Class of its Subjects. Public Happiness is the true End of all Government: We have seen how diffusive that is made by the *English Government*; and it were easy to shew, that public Wealth and Plenty, from whatever Source it arises, is also founded in public Freedom.

This Constitution never dies.—But Kings, who are the Head of it, are mortal; and after all the Precautions taken by the Constitution, very much of the Temper of the Government will depend upon the Disposition of the reigning Prince. As that is more or less mild and equitable; as that is more or less friendly to the Cause of public Liberty; so will be the Government.—Laws are but a dead Letter; and of very doubtful and various Interpretation. So that even keeping within the Limits of the Constitution, a Government may be more or less mild, in various Degrees, as its Laws are administer'd with more or less Rigour; as its Penal Laws, in particular, are inforc'd with more or less Violence. The King gives Activity to the Laws; Judges and Magistrates act by his Authority; and, as it were, in his Person: It is by these Ministers, that a King of *England* appears, in a Manner, in Person to his People.

It may safely be taken for a Rule, that the Disposition of a King of *England* to maintain his People's Rights free and inviolable, or not, may be collected from the Choice he makes of his Judges; and from the free, or obstructed Course of Justice, which prevails in his several High Courts of Judicature.—The first Advances to arbitrary Power, the first attacks upon Liberty, have ever been made in these Courts. Stretching Penal Laws up to their highest Pitch;

Pitch ; involving Men under various, strain'd, far fetch'd, and very frequently quite illegal Pretences, in severe Prosecutions ; bringing them under terrible Confiscations, endless Imprisonments, Fines, and Corporal Punishments, intolerable ; seizing Charters, and destroying the civil Rights of the Subjects : These were the Ways, by which the public Liberty was first invaded, under the several Reigns of the *Stuarts*. Besides these Violences, practis'd in the legal Courts, illegal and arbitrary Courts were erected ; and throughout the Whole an abandoned Set of Men were found, to assume the Seat and Robe of Justice ; to declare that to be Law, which the King chose should be Law ; to declare that to be Treason, which the King would have to be Treason : And every Man was, by some means or other, adjudg'd a Delinquent, who oppos'd himself, with any Abilities, to the pernicious Designs of those Princes. The next Step was to declare the King's Power of dispensing with the Laws to be legal. And the next to that would, probably, have been, a legal Right of making Laws too, by the divine Right of his sole Authority. But it stop'd before it came to that : The deluded, unhappy Prince lost his Crown, and the People sav'd their Liberties.

With the above State of Things, compare the mild and equal Course of Justice, under the Princes of the House of *Hanover* ; and I may add, under the Reign of Queen *Ann*. Compare the Lenity of judicial Proceedings, as to the Execution of penal Laws, and the Equity observ'd in all Contests, between the Crown and the Subject, in the two Periods of Time. Let the Characters and Conduct of those advanc'd under the *Stuart* Reigns, to the first Posts of Judicature, be compar'd with those in the same Station, under the present Reign. That is, let the Worst of Men be compar'd with the Best ; the *Jeffreys's* of the former Reigns, with the *Talbots* and *Hardwicks* of the other ;

other ; and from these several Comparisons, let a Judgment be form'd of the different State of public Liberty, in these Times and the former, and the different Dispositions of the several Princes, as to the Rights and Freedom of their Subjects.

As a King of *England* appears what he is, as a King, and what are his Intentions, with respect to the Freedom of his Subjects, by the Abilities and Probity of his Judges, and by the free Course he leaves to the Laws ; so he never appears so truly what he is, as a Man, as when a defeated Rebellion throws the Lives of Multitudes of his offending Subjects into his Power.

If ever any Rebellion may truly be call'd unnatural, the late Rebellion was so ; not only, as it was a Rebellion against the most mild and equitable Government, that ever existed in *England* ; a Government, that had never given any of its Subjects any great Reason to complain, much less to rebel ; but also as it was enter'd upon, to serve the Purposes of the ancient, and inveterate Enemies of *Britain*. The Wretches, who engag'd in it, made themselves the despicable Tools of a little Trick of *French* Politicks. But this Rebellion produc'd an Effect, little expected by those, that set it on foot : It prov'd to all the World, that the Nation, almost to a Man, was too sensible of the true Worth of the Prince and Government it was under, ever to exchange them. And that diffusive Spirit of Goodness, which has been so sparing of Punishment, must, if any thing can, make Impressions of Gratitude and Duty, upon the whole offending Faction, and all its secret, as well as open Adherents.

After the Rebellion was suppress'd, the Sword of Justice was drawn with a Hand manifestly reluctant ; and it was sheath'd again as soon as drawn. Compare the Temper of his present Majesty, and that of his illustrious Father, under a like Circumstance ;

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compare, I say, the Temper of these Princes, pardoning the greatly, the incontestably, guilty; with the Spirit of that Government, which profan'd, which delug'd the Courts of Justice, with the Blood of the Noble and Illustrious Innocent; with the Bloods of *Sidney* and *Russell*! and that too, by the most diabolical of all State Villanies, forg'd Plots, and prostituted Witnesses. Compare the extensive Mercy of a *George* to his rebellious Subjects, with the Blood-thirsty Vengeance of a *James*. Read, examine the dreadful Executions, which follow'd the Duke of *Monmouth's* Defeat; and then tell me, which of these Princes appears to be the true Father of his People, the true Friend of human Kind, and which no

it is not from Declamation and Flourish, but from Facts only, that a true Judgment can be form'd, as to the State of public Liberty, and the Disposition of Princes to maintain it. Never was *English* Liberty so extensive; never was it so well establish'd, as at present. Freedom of Property; Freedom of Speech and Judgment; Freedom of Conscience; all these, are now in their highest State of Safety and Perfection. No Hardships, no Severities, are brought by this Government upon any of them; and the reigning Prince has given all the Demonstrations, that a Prince can give, of his Disposition to maintain them. No Encroachments of Prerogative appear; no severe Acts of Power in any of the Courts of Justice.

Strong and peremptory Assertions, as to Matters of Fact, are no Proofs, let them come from whom they will. Examine then; compare Reign with Reign; bring these Facts to a fair Trial; point out, if it can be done, the Circumstances of greater Liberty; set down the Time when it happen'd; shew the Reign under which Liberty had half the Extent and Security, as it has had under the present, and the late Reign. It is not the ancient *English* Liberty that

that is wanting to the Happiness of the present Times ; for in Point of Freedom, we vastly surpass our Fore-Fathers ; but it is in the sober Sense, and the plain Honesty of our Ancestors, that we are sadly deficient.

The Monster, divine Right, that mock Divinity, which assum'd the Power of creating and annihilating all civil Right, by the mere Act of its Will, is effectually subdued ; and the Rights and operative Power of the several Members of the Common Wealth are so well balanc'd and adjusted ; and that Adjustment is so firmly established, that the People have all the Assurances, which any civil Establishment can possibly give them, of the Security of their Liberties.—This is further confirm'd, by the favourable Disposition, as to public Liberty, of the present Race of Princes, manifested upon every occasion.

When it is said, that the *English* Liberty is firmly establish'd, no more can be meant by it, or ought to be understood, than this ; that it has all the Stability, which any civil Establishment can give it ; and that, so long as that Establishment remains, it is secure.

But gay and flourishing, as Liberty and its Establishment may appear, a corroding Canker preys upon the Root of this fair Flower, and, in some unexpected Moment, it will fade and die !

Those perpetual Jars, between the Prerogatives of the Crown, and the civil Rights of the Subject, which prov'd the Bane of public Happiness thro' a long Course of Years, were terminated by the Revolution ; and that Event may be consider'd as the Birth of Liberty. But Frailty and Imperfection mixes itself with every thing that is human. Liberty was born with the Seeds of Dissolution : At its very Birth it receiv'd a Contagion, which was to work its final Ruin ; and as the political Constitution has encreas'd in Vigour, so has the latent Poison exerted it's mortal Influence with augmented Fury.

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*The young Disease, which must subdue at length,
Grows with it's Growth, and Strengthens with it's
Strength.*

Pope.

Luxury, Parties, Corruption, and national Debts, make the fatal Composition of this political Poison!

The Revolution, in its first Establishment, found a most potent Enemy to contend with: The Defence, it was necessitated to make, rais'd the national Expences, beyond what almost any Revenue could supply, which could be rais'd in the current Year. And hence arose the Necessity, either real or suppos'd, of anticipating the Revenues, by selling, or mortgaging them. This created public Credit; and thus the public Safety was made to depend upon the most fluctuating and unsteady of all things, Opinion. As that, the Opinion of the public Sufficiency was more or less prevalent, Money was rais'd upon easier or harder Terms.

Parties were, in the mean Time, outrageous and violent. It was soon found, that this same Credit made the weak Side of the Government, (as it ever will) and the Business of Parties was to attack it on this weak Side, and to load this new acquir'd Credit with all the Suspicions and Difficulties in their Power; and that they did with a Vengeance. If any one will inform himself of the high Interest allow'd, and the vast Discount of Twenty, Thirty, and Forty *per Cent* at which a great Part of the public Bargains were transacted; if he will compute too the astonishing Effect this must have had, towards augmenting the national Debt, thro' the long Track of Years, for which Interest has been paid for this Extortion, he will see one Instance of the Benefit, which Parties have been of to this Nation.

The House of Commons gave Life to the Government, and all its Operations, by the Power it had of providing the Supplies. A Majority, in that
House,

House, determin'd to grant none, or upon such Terms only, as could not be comply'd with, put an effectual Stop to all the Operations of the State. Thus the little Trick of distressing an Administration was soon discover'd; and the Remedy to this Inconvenience was as soon found, and successfully applied. Money, or the Admission to a Share of Power, would prevail with such, as were inaccessible to Argument. Patriots, (my Reader will observe I am only speaking of Patriots, as they were half a Century ago, (were venal, and to be bought. This Corruption encreas'd the Clamour of Parties; and the Clamour of Parties, again, encreas'd both the Degree and Extent of Corruption. *London*, and the *Court*, were soon found to be the best Situation, as well to acquire Wealth with Ease, as to expend it in Pleasure and Luxury.

The Nation, which had warr'd for Defence under the Revolution Reign, took the Humour to fight for Glory, during the greatest Part of that, which succeeded. So the Millions went out, and the Glory came in, with great Alacrity.—In the mean time, the national Debt was growing to an enormous Size. The Revenues arising to private Persons, from their several Shares in the public Debt, help'd to supply the Means of supporting an encreasing Luxury, and a high Taste for refin'd Pleasures. As the national Debt encreas'd, so the several Branches of the Revenues were also encreasing, to supply Funds for the Payment of the Interest, or Annuity, to the public Creditors. And this introduc'd an unlimited Train of Places; and these Places serv'd to make both Corruption and Luxury more extensive; and the inexhaustable Mine of public Credit was to pay the whole Reckoning.

This may serve to give a general Idea of the Growth and Progress of that Distemper, which begins to appear with mortal Symptoms, in the *English* Constitution.

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It had no sooner receiv'd its confirm'd State of Liberty, but it found a Weakness arising, by the Degeneracy of Vertue, and public Spirit, from that very Circumstance, which seem'd its peculiar Felicity; the extensive Power of the Representatives of the People: and that, without any Breach made in the Constitution; without any Encroachment made by one of its Members upon another, or any Violence offer'd to the particular Freedom of any Individual. The Constitution is not maim'd, but it is sickly. And tho' the present prevailing Corruption might, probably, in time to come, throw the whole Liberty of *Britain* into the Power of an aspiring Prince, conducted by an able and enterprizing Minister, a *Charles* and a *Strafford*; yet that is a remote Fear, in Comparison of the more immediate Danger, which the whole Constitution seems to be in, of sinking intire, under the immense Load of its own Debt.

It might prove a very unhappy Delusion to imagine, from the Facility with which Money is constantly rais'd by the Government, that there can be no Danger, in adding, from time to time, to the monstrous and unnatural Credit, which is given to the Public. Private Men, very frequently, support the Glare and Splendor of Wealth and Credit, to the very Hour of Bankruptcy.—And tho' I am confident, that the Public is under no immediate Danger, (as the War is at an End) of any Failure of Credit, yet it is surely high time to consider, that it is even at present arriv'd to such a Point, as sets our Danger before us in a strong Light. We are not indeed fallen; nor, if we will prudently and cautiously recede, are we in Danger of falling; but the Precipice is before our Eyes, a few Steps farther might be fatal; and the extream Danger of our Situation can be calmly consider'd, only while we are in a State of Safety. Upon the very Brink of the Precipice our Heads will turn giddy, and, but to look at it then, will precipitate our Fall.

The first Million, borrow'd upon a mortgag'd Revenue, taken in all its Consequences, made, perhaps, the first Step to the Dissolution of this Government. There is a *Ne plus ultra* in taxing; there is, I presume, some Limitation to the Spring of public Credit; it has some Bound, beyond which, if it be strain'd, it will break.—Is it safe to prove the very utmost Stretch it will bear? And yet, in the present State of the national Debt, what Resources has the Public of any Extent, without putting the Whole to the Hazard? The Mass of this Debt is already so immense, that was it to fall, it must inevitably bury the Constitution, and all Property of every Kind, under its Ruins: At least, it seems not a mere imaginary Fear, that no less than this would be the Consequence. And if, by any Excess of ministerial Prodigality, or any other Means, however necessary, it should be still augmented; the Ruin, occasion'd by its Fall, would be still more fatally extensive. For there is no evaporating eighty, or a hundred Millions, without any other Effect, than the particular Loss of the Proprietors of those Millions. The Sponge, whenever it is apply'd, will not be able to cancel so dexterously; and it is in vain to think of separate Interest, in a Time of universal Desolation.

The first notorious Breach made in this Credit must prove fatal. A Breach, once made, could not be stop'd, before such a Deluge of Mischief would pour in as would overwhelm all. The particular Credit of every Man in the Kingdom would be, at least, suspended, if not ruin'd; and a total Stop to the Circulation of all Specie must take Place. And it is these, the free Circulation of Specie, and the Integrity of Credit, or mutual Confidence, that form the real Bands of Society. Civil Union is connected by these Ligatures; and these, once failing, the whole System would not barely be relax'd, but disjoin'd and abolish'd. With these, several other fatal Circumstances would not fail to co-operate: A State of
anarchy,

Anarchy, of universal Plunder and Destruction would succeed; and any Power, that civil Authority could oppose to this universal Uproar and Confusion, would be as vain, as an Attempt to calm the Sea in a Storm. All civil Authority must be lost; and a total Dissolution of Government could not but insue. The Application of any Degree of military Power would, perhaps, be ineffectual; besides, that such a Remedy, were it practicable, might probably prove almost as bad as the Disease.

If these Apprehensions have any Foundation in Reason, then the Security, and of Course the true Value of all Property of every Kind, rises or falls, as the national Debt advances or diminishes. As it advances, the Safety of the Whole becomes more precarious: As that Debt decreases, the Whole becomes more secure, and of Course of higher Value. So that, consider'd only in this Light; without reckoning the excessive Burthen brought upon Trade, and the Interest of private Persons, by the Multitude of additional Taxes, which must be produc'd to support an advancing Debt; without reckoning the national Weakness and Debility, which advance yearly, as the Debt encreases; without giving the full Weight to these, and many other Considerations, which yet are of the last Moment and Importance; and considering the national Debt, only as affecting the Security of all Property, and the Preservation of the Establishment intire; it seems to include the proper Interest of every single *English* Subject, to have the Nation, and with that his own particular Interest, exonerated, by just and proper Degrees of that Burthen, which threatens Ruin to the Whole. Land, or real Estate, is a Kind of Property of all others the most stable; and is that, which, of all others, would, under such a Catastrophe, be the most remotely affected. And yet the Possession of this Kind of Property would be so precarious, under a Dissolution of Government, that,

was the national Debt augmented twenty or thirty Millions, it might reasonably be question'd, whether the best landed Estate in *England*, with the clearest legal Title, would be worth four Years purchase, upon a just Estimation of all Hazards.

Under a free Government, such as is the *British*, every Man's private Interest is included in the Safety and Prosperity of his Country, and cannot be separated from it. Every Man must, whether he will or not, take the same Chance with his Country; he must stand or fall with it. So, in the Case before us, the national Debt is, in Effect, as much a Debt and Incumbrance upon every Man's Estate, as if all the Lands in the Kingdom were mortgag'd for the Payment of it. Every Merchant's and Tradesman's particular Credit is animated by the public Credit, and must expire with it. A Bankruptcy of the public Credit would be, probably, a Bankruptcy to every Individual.

The Return of Peace once more puts it into our Power; I fear I must add, but barely puts it into our Power, to save ourselves from total Ruin. To attempt this is not only a Duty, which every Man owes to his Country, but he also owes it to himself; to his own particular Interest; to his own Family. And that, which is thus the Duty and Interest of all, can only be effected by the united Concurrence of all, for if the Experience of repeated Trials can have fail'd to evince it, a very little Consideration of the Nature of Things will prove, that all Attempts to redress national Grievances, by playing off Party against Party, will ever be so far from effecting a Cure, that it will constantly and invariably encrease and inflame the Disease. The People of *Great Britain* are, by the Constitution, of too great Dignity, to be either effectually ruin'd, or sav'd from impending Ruin, but by themselves. Nor can it ever be in the Power of any Party, or separate Body of them,
how -

however considerable in their Abilities, or however upright and disinterested in their Intentions, to effect any considerable Redress to the public Grievances, if the general Endeavour, or at least Acquiescence of the Public itself, does not concur or co-operate with them.

There are in Nature no other Means of public Safety and Prosperity, under a free Government, than what arise from, Union. As a free People perfectly united, form, of all others, the strongest and firmest Establishment; so the Disunion of a free People makes a Weakness in Government the most threatening, and its Duration ~~is~~ the most precarious of any other. The more extensive, the more perfect the State of public Liberty is made, by any political Constitution; so much the more is that Constitution enfeebled and indanger'd by the Disunion of its Members or Subjects.

An absolute or despotick Government, as it is founded in Power, so it has always within itself the Means to enforce a Submission to its Determinations. Force supplies the Place of free and rational Harmony; Discontents dare not vent themselves, even in a Whisper; and the People, however intolerable their Grievances may be, have not Weight enough to procure for themselves Redress, or to clog, or impede the Operations of the State, for the want of it. Their Efforts are as much despis'd, as their Complaints are unpitied by their Governors. But under a free Government, tho' the different Sentiments of contending Parties may be contested with great Spirit and Vivacity; and tho' that Contention, or rather the very Capacity of contending, is a Proof of the public Freedom; yet such Contentions are always hazardous, and if they don't soon subside, must prove fatal to public Liberty.—A free People disuniting, depart from the first Principle of their Establishment: They subvert the very Basis of their Constitution; and if a free Government, under such Circumstances

be preserv'd from degenerating, or is kept from expiring, it can only be effected by palliating Means; by such Means as must, in the End, prove fatal.

A little Attention to the party Disputes, and their Consequences, by which these Nations have been distracted, for more than half a Century, will abundantly prove and confirm the above Observations. What else has prevail'd during that long Period, but continual Jealousy, Distraction and Animosity, between the Parties in Power and out of it? And between the People, divided and disunited by a fierce, implicit, and stupid Attachment, the Dogma of their several Leaders? The History of that Period amounts to little more, than the History of the Contentions, Defeats and Triumphs of Parties.—To this one single Object, the Contention of Parties, has all the little Wit and Writing of the present Age been confin'd; and if that was all the Mischief, it would not indeed be worth complaining of. But in the universal Clamour and Outrage of Parties, more particularly when they are agitated by any violent Emotion of Zeal, or political Frenzy, as total a Depravation of human Nature, as total an Extinction of every thing that looks like Reason, Morals, and Religion, takes Place, as can be exhibited in the Person of the most deplorable Tenant of a Mad-house.

A Year of Pestilence or Famine could not prove so incurable, so irrecoverable a Calamity to this Nation, as is constantly the Effect of a hotly contested general Election. Every Good, that Government is intended to produce, or is capable of producing, becomes defeated; every Obligation, every Enjoyment of the social Sort, becomes annull'd and extinguish'd; and the savage *Iroquois* or *Hattentots* are not more compleatly devoid of Morals, Order, Decency, and civiliz'd Manners, than are the *English* under such a Circumstance: As is but too evident in the atrocious Venality, Prostitution, and Perjury of one Party; and

and the Lies, Slander, Drunkenness, and Madness of the other. Between them both, and throughout both, all Conversation becomes imbitter'd, suspicious, and invidious; the Faith of Friendships violated and incurably disjointed; the Peace and Harmony of Families mortally wounded; the Interests of Tradesmen, and of all who depend for their Subsistence upon the general good Will of their Neighbours, cruelly and oppressively invaded; Health destroy'd; Honour, Conscience, and Fortunes dissipated. In a Word, every Dictate of Gratitude; every Consideration of personal Independency; every Suggestion of Sense, Moderation, and Vertue, totally eras'd and obliterated. Such are the fatal Effects, and that invariably, of our hot party Contentions! And, to sum up all, it may be affirm'd, that the Malice of Man, aided by the Suggestion of the Devil, could not produce from any other single Cause, by any Artifice, Effects so compleatly destructive to Reason, Liberty, and Truth, as arise from our electioning Madness.

Give me, kind Heaven! for myself and my Posterity, the sober Slavery of *Turkey*, in Preference to this Kind of Freedom; or of any Good to Society, which can be procur'd by such detestable Means!

And yet, it seems, all this is no more, than an Indication of our Freedom; and the rancorous Up-roar of Parties passes smoothly in the Language of one of them, for a glorious Stand for Liberty; and in the Court Dialect of the other, for Loyalty, and a dutiful Attachment to the Sovereign. If I was to see a Man beating himself in good earnest, and fetching Blood away from his Body, by the Force and Sincerity of his Blows; it would indeed amount to a full Proof, that his Hands were not tied: But if no other Intention was to be serv'd, but barely to prove he was not Hand-cuff'd, I should suspect a little the Soundness of his Head, whatever Compliments I might make to the Freedom of his Fists.

The Union of Limbs and Members in the natural Body, and their acting uniformly, for the Good and Preservation of the corporeal System; is not more natural, is not more essentially necessary to Self-Preservation; than the harmonious Concurrence of every Member of a free State in the Order, Œconomy, Morals, and Integrity of the Public, is to the Life and Existence of a free political System. A free People, divided and opposing one another, is in Fact fighting one Hand against the other: The Blows they give in such a Conflict fall upon themselves; 'tis their own proper Strength they are wasting; their own vital Spirits they are exhausting; their own Blood they are expending; and the Wounds they give themselves, in this untatural Combat, if curable at all, can only be cur'd at their own Expence.

Thus that Corruption, that insatiable Avarice of Places and Power, which gives Life and Energy to these unnatural Contentions; that Corruption, which at one Time sets Parties into a Ferment, and a little after stupifies them into Repose, draws its whole Nourishment from the public Treasure. And the Septennial Farces, exhibited for public Amusement, whatever Air of Generosity may be assum'd, or however courteous and condescending the chief Actors may appear, must, in the End, be paid for by the Spectators, and that dearly too.

Corruption is the epidemical Distemper of the Nation. The Infection is become general, and its Universality makes its Cure as desperate as it is necessary. But it rages most in those Boroughs and Counties, where the Influences of the Parties are nearest to a State of Equilibrium. The Weight of this turns the Scale; and a Superiority, obtainable by no better Means, makes the Point of Merit to be determin'd between them. Some little Truce, in behalf of common Sense, may be observ'd to take Place, wherever one Party is in full Possession, and the other com-

completely routed. And it surpasses my Comprehension, how it can be a Matter worth the Notice of a disinterested Man, which of the two is in Possession, so that one be in quiet Possession.

But in general, a State of constant Warfare is maintain'd between them; they have almost every where Deputies and Factors; certain political Pimps and Procurers, whose Business it is to debauch the People, to the requisite Degree of Prostitution, for the Use and Behoof of their Principals. The Whole of this goodly Occupation is very happily express'd by this short, but significant Phrase, making an Interest. These Interest-making Agents are very expert and assiduous; perfect Artists in their way; and whether the said Interest is to be rais'd by a judicious Application of Money and Places, or by the more plausible Practices of popular Pretences, and the Declamations of Patriotism, it comes all to a Reckoning: An Interest is the Object; and the Interest-making Parties differ, but as Possession differs from Reversion; what one has in Hand, the other has in sure and certain Hope; and were they to change, were those that are in, to be out, and those that are out, to be in, the only Difference would be this, that just the same Parts would be play'd over again, by different Actors. The Part and Speech of a Quondam Place-man would be occupy'd by a Patriot, and the discarded Place-man would, in his turn,

—*Bellow out for Rome and for his Country,
And mouth at Cæsar 'till he shakes the Senate.*

Addison.

In Days of Yore, here and there, a superior Genius us'd to light upon the Discovery, that all Mankind were Rascals at the Bottom, and that Self-interest was the ruling Principle in every Man: And tho' the Sagacity of a Statesman might be able to detect the Fallacy of Virtue, public Spirit, and the romantick
Notion

Notion of loving one's Country, yet he kept the Discovery to himself, and in the mean Time serv'd his own Purposes, by cultivating and directing, for the public Benefit, Notions which had no Influence upon his own Mind.

But in this enlighten'd Age the whole Mystery is laid open. However we came at the Knowledge, we are all to a Man, it seems, too wise to Sacrifice the substantial Goods, Wealth, Luxury and Power, to the empty Sounds of a few chimerical and exploded Notions. "The Dignity of Vice is lost," and the meerest Booby in a Borough now disdains to be led away from his Interest by empty Sounds, by Notions, which he too can detect. Venality is the Word; "not to be corrupted is the Shame"; not to be of Consequence enough to attract corrupt Application, the only dreaded Reproach: Every Man's Vote is a Part of his trading Stock, and his Business is, to lay it out to the best Advantage.

By the Contention of Parties, and their violent and corrupt Methods of prosecuting their several Interests, the Electors, even the lowest amongst them, have been so long accusom'd to find their Votes lucrative, that they are even in Love with Venality. They are to the full as ready to receive corrupt Impressions, as any can be to offer them: the true Use and Importance of their Privileges are not so much as known by them; and they even form Schemes to raise and foment Contests and Oppositions, with no other View but to enhance the Value of their Suffrages.

While a Disposition, so directly destructive of Virtue and Union, prevails thro' all Ranks of People, all Attempts to save the Nation from Ruin, by changing the Persons of Ministers, will be fruitless; for tho' the Persons Administring be chang'd, yet the Maxims and Measures of Administration must remain invariably the same. Take a new Set of Ministers once a Month, till every Man in the Kingdom has had

had his Turn; and when that is done to no Purpose, bring into the first Posts of Administration an Angel from Heaven, (depriv'd of the Powers of working Miracles) and let that Angel be traduc'd and vilified; let it be given out, by some nameless Scribler, in the modern Stile, that our Counterfeit G—d—n A—g—l is a M—n—r of S—t—n; that another nameless somebody had seen his Clo—n F—t; the People would take Fire upon no better Authority; particular Men would find their Account in raising against him an Opposition; all Confidence would be lost, and Corruption alone could supply the Place of it.

How far particular Men in Power may or may not be favourable to the Cause of Corruption, is hardly possible to distinguish: We can have no Rule to judge by, since in the present State of Things, it is but too apparent, that Corruption is the only Medium of Government; the Means by which alone that Distrust and Unpopularity, which by the Management of Parties stick close to all Men in Power without Distinction, can be balanc'd and kept under. If a bad Minister is corrupt out of Choice, an honest Minister must be so out of Necessity; nor can he be otherwise by any other Means, than by the free, uncorrupted Concurrence of the several Constituents of the legislative Authority. Concurrence must be obtain'd; a Majority must acquiesce in some Measures or other; or Government must be at a Stand; and the Terms of Acquiescence must rest upon the Honour, or Venality of that Majority: Such Terms, as they will act upon, must be comply'd with; nor can any Degree of Address, or Integrity in the Ministers, make it otherwise.

And if by the Establishment, the Constituents of legislative Authority, or of any Member of legislative Authority, are elected by the People: then the prevailing Sense of that People, as to public Spirit, Liberty,

berty, and Independence, or the Degeneracy and Disregard of these; may be collected from the Conduct of those they make Choice of for their Representatives, and the Terms and Conditions upon which they are elected. So that the Root of Corruption rests at last in the Degeneracy of the People.

Some Men must necessarily be intrusted with the Power of Administration, and the Constitution has guarded by various means against any notorious, or fatal Abuse of that Power. Yet, notwithstanding this, Ministers and their Ways cannot be too attentively inspected by those, whose Duty it is to be Guardians of the Liberty and Revenues of the Public. But Reason and Experience concur to demonstrate, that this cannot be done to any good Purpose, by the indiscriminate Opposition of a Party; which will ever do as little real Service within Doors, as it never fails to do Mischief without: But it can only be effected by a candid, dispassionate, unbiass'd, and disinterested Attention to public Measures; and a firm, immovable Determination to oppose, or acquiesce indifferently, as Reason and Conscience dictate, let the first Mover of such Measures be who he will, in Power or out of it.

The Reins of Administration must however be trusted in some Hands. The Affairs of Government are complicated and intricate; and some Candour, some Temper must be observ'd; some Allowance must be made to those who hold them; some Confidence must be plac'd in them, or it is very obvious how the Want will be supply'd.

The Question is, who may be trusted with any Degree of Safety to the Public? Not a Man in the Kingdom, who has hitherto appear'd upon the Stage of public Action; if we are to form implicitly our Opinions of public Characters, from the Representations of party Writers. By the Management of these Gentlemen, and that Authority, which to the
Reproach

Reproach and Infamy of Decency and common Sense they have acquir'd, and domineeringly exert, not a Man, entering into the Service of the Public, can support any Kind of Reputation with the People above a Month or two. Half a Sessions of Parliament annihilates it compleatly; tho' that Reputation is the only Means by which he can do them honest Service.

Notwithstanding the great personal Worth, and matchless Abilities of the late Lord *Orford*, his Administration, by what Means is not for me to say, became so unpopular, that his Retreat from Power was quite necessary, under a Government so popular as the *English*, No Minister, let his Abilities be what they will, can ~~successfully~~ ^{pu} serve his Country, if he labours under a general Disesteem; however that Disesteem may be in the main undeserv'd.

The Opposition to that great Minister had, for its Leaders, several noble Persons of the first Eminence, as to Rank, Fortune and Abilities; and these Gentlemen, as they had the Concurrence of a very great Part of the Kingdom in their Opposition, so were they in as high a Degree of popular and general Esteem, as perhaps any set of Gentlemen will ever be in Time to come. No Demonstration of public Spirit, of an Abhorrence of Corruption, of an unbiass'd Attachment to the Honour and Interest of their Country, was defective; but their real Patriotism was incontestable.—I presume it was not desir'd, or intended, either by the noble Persons themselves, or their Adherents, that their Eloquence should be for ever employ'd in fighting the Air, under the Form of an Opposition; but the Point aim'd at by both undoubtedly was, that by displacing an obnoxious Minister, room should be made for his noble Opponents, to act with superior Abilities or Integrity, for the Benefit of their Country.—The obnoxious great Man was accordingly remov'd, and those very Gentlemen
were

were plac'd near the Throne, were invested in Offices of Power and Importance, who seem'd recommended to them by the almost concurrent Voice of the People: And what was the Consequence? Their Popularity vanish'd intirely before the Wax of their Patents was cold; they had hardly appear'd twice at St. *James's*, before they were as liberally revil'd and defam'd, as any the staunchest Veteran in the Service of Corruption ever could be: Their Hearts were condemn'd, before their Intentions could be known by their Actions; and the Merit of many Years Service, in the Cause of Liberty, was almost instantaneously expung'd, by the malignant Breath of Slander and Scurrility.

If the several eminent Personages, who came into Power, upon the Dismission of the Lord *Orford*, had retain'd their great Popularity, instead of losing it, very great and important Service to their Country might have been the Consequence; and 'tis beyond Measure uncandid, to charge them with want of Disposition to act for the public Benefit; since, before they could act at all, they were depriv'd of that public Confidence, which alone could make their Services importantly beneficial.—

And the same Track, Removal of Men, without mending of Measures, may be run thro' to Eternity to no Purpose, if the Insinuations and Innuendos of a prostitute Pamphleteer shall be continually suffer'd to have Credit enough, without any better Authority, than his own Surmises, to blast Reputations, and render Characters odious, which have establish'd a merited Popularity. As the Credit and Influence of these Writers may justly pass for one of the unnatural Prodigies of the Age, it may not be amiss to inquire a little upon what this tremendous Authority is founded.

A Writer, who gives his Sentiments to the Public, upon any general Subject or Opinion, leaves it
with

with the Public, to receive or reject his Sentiments, to allow or controvert his Arguments, as it sees proper. If a Treatise be publish'd upon any of the Sciences, the Writer is then to be consider'd, as appealing to the Judgment or Experience of such as are knowing in that Science. If upon any well known Part of History, the Reader is then at Liberty to form his Judgment, by examining whether the Facts be fairly stated; the Inferences and Deductions just and candid; and the Writer is fairly open to Detection, if he fails in any of them. And in all these Cases, and many more, which might be mention'd, tho' the Name or Character of the Writer, if it be respectable, may and ought to engage the more general Attention; yet as it can, in fact, add no real Weight, much less a decisive one to his Arguments, Reasonings, &c. which must, at last, be determin'd by their own intrinsic Merit, by a Clearness, or Propriety of Conviction, in which the Personality of the Writer has nothing to do, the public Appearance of his Name is not necessary.

But the Case is widely different, where a Writer takes upon him to be the Reporter, or first Publisher, of a mere Matter of Fact; or founds the Basis of his Argument upon any Matters of Fact, not generally known, or upon any particular or general Assertion not universally acknowledg'd. For in these and all parallel Cases, the Personality of the Writer must make its Appearance; or no Kind of Conviction, nor any Degree of Evidence, as to the Reality of the Novel, or disputable Fact, or the Veracity of the Attestation can appear.—And if the Facts themselves are not establish'd; if the Assertion has no Pretension to be admitted, for want of a sufficient Degree of Evidence; then all Attempts to ascertain the Motives of the Agent, with all Deductions and Inferences, by which the Consequences and Effects, as attributable to the Agent, are pretended to be mark'd out

out, must be merely visionary, and will fall to the Ground of Course.

In general mere Matters of Fact, and such too as are far enough from being establish'd incontestably by their Notoriety; and Assertions, which are by no means agreed to by a general Assent; serve as the Basis of the political Discourses of all Parties; in which the Writers trouble themselves very little, as to any Kind of Evidence; but as they find it much easier to harangue and declaim, than to reason, and as their Intention is best answer'd that way, their whole Business is, to assert roundly, affirm peremptorily, and the World, constantly ready to meet Suspicion and Slander more than half way, is servile enough to believe implicitly.

Upon this well known implicit Faith of the Public our nameless party Writers intirely rely. The Whole of their Business, I say not universally, but generally, is, not to inform or convince the Understanding of their Readers, but to alarm their Suspicions, to interest their Distrust and Jealousy in the Event of the Argument; and when that is effectually done, any Thing will pass for Proof and Conviction. If the Reader will favour me with a little candid Attention, I think it may be made appear, even with the Force of a Demonstration, that the Assertions of a nameless Writer, together with all his Reasoning and Deductions from such Assertions, are so far from deserving universal Credit, that they are absolutely incapable of any, even the lowest Degree of rational Credit at all.

All the moral Evidence of the Truth of any Assertion, which rests intirely upon the Authority of the Assertor, arises from the Credibility of the Things asserted, and the personal Credit of the Assertor.

If that, which is asserted, exceeds the Limits of natural or moral Possibility, then the Truth of the Assertion cannot be assented to, without some higher testi-

testimonial than mere moral Evidence. If the Assertion implies no natural or moral Impossibility, it stands then upon the Foot of Probability, and its Reality admits of moral Evidence.

It implies no natural or moral impossibility, that *Peter*, some Man intirely unknown to me, should be either as wise, or as weak, as upright, or as wicked, as any Man under his Circumstances ever was. If it be necessary for me to form any Opinion about *Peter* and his Ways, merely from the Testimony of another, it then remains that this Testimony comes authenticated by a proper Degree of moral Evidence, for without that, my Belief or Opinion about *Peter* must be merely fortuitous, chimerical and irrational.

Credibility of Testimony, upon which the moral Evidence of the Truth of any mere Assertion intirely depends, consists in the Capacity, Veracity and Disinterestedness of the Testifier; or, in other Words, I receive the Testimony, or acquiesce in the Assertion, because I have sufficient Reason to believe, that the Fact, or Thing asserted, is fully known to the Assertor; that he is not deceiv'd in it himself by want of competent Knowledge; and that his disinterested Integrity is such, that he would not deceive, or mislead me by a false Report.

So that it appears evidently, that the Personality of the Writer, whose Assertions I am requir'd to admit, must be had recourse to as the only Means, by which any Sort of moral Evidence can be come at.—It rests wholly upon his personal Capacity, personal Integrity, personal Disinterestedness; and it is the Weight alone of these conjoin'd, that can rationally determine my Assent.—Since, if I am not assur'd of these, I give myself up blindly to receive every Fallacy, which the Craft and Interest of designing Men may find their Account in imposing upon me.

If it be said, that the personal Character of a Writer cannot be generally known with any Certainty, tho' his Name was to appear to his Assertion; I reply, recourse might however be had to it; such as doubted might inquire and inform themselves; the Writer would stake his Reputation upon the Verity of his Assertion; and that is, in reality, the greatest Stake any Man can Pledge to the Public; at least it would be so, if the true Dignity of Honour and Reputation was better understood, than it seems to be in these Days of Degeneracy.

But however, the Name or Personality of the Assertor is indispensably necessary; not only to establish any Degree of Evidence, but to the very Existence of the Assertion itself.

This might be illustrated by innumerable Instances, in which the Writings of party Scriblers are abundantly fertile; but I shall do it by one, taken from a late Pamphlet of this Stamp, intitled *An Examination of the Principles, &c. of the two B——rs*. The Whole of that Performance stands upon the same Bottom, Assertion without Evidence. I shall pitch upon an Instance the least invidious; and by examining this Specimen, the Merit of the Whole may be determin'd, and with it the Merit of all such Writers, and the Credit that is due to them.

I will only premise, that I enter not into any avow'd Defence of the two B——rs; nor is it necessary, since, if I am right, nobody accuses them; nor is any Accusation brought against them. If they are M——n——rs of St——te, they are without the necessary Tools of their Art, in the modern Practice of it, unless they have retain'd in their Service Writers, who can repay Scurrility in kind.

All the Interest that I, or any other unbiass'd Man, can have in such Disputes, is, that we do not suffer Truth and common Sense to be prostituted to Humour and Prejudice; and that before we assent to
any

any Opinion, we have some better Ground for it than Clamour and Nonsense.

The greatest Outrage that can be committed upon human Reason; the greatest Indignity that can be put upon common Sense, is, to be requir'd to assent without Conviction; to believe without Reason; and to rely implicitly, without any rational Ground of Confidence. All this Violence is committed by our party Writers, and that with but too much Success.

Among many other very extraordinary Discoveries, all deliver'd in the modern Way of Assertion without Evidence, we are inform'd in the abovemention'd Pamphlet, that two Gentlemen in high Post of Administration, denoted by the two B——rs, were determin'd to ruin the War, which, it seems, they did not approve. That one Method, which they took to effect this, was, to throw Obstructions in the Way of any military Enterprize that might probably be successful: That in particular, when the Sieges of *Maubeuge* and *Landrecy* were propos'd, Artillery sufficient for those Sieges could not be procur'd. And that tho' the finest Train we ever sent Abroad lay at *Ostend*, yet the B——rs would not suffer one Piece to be brought up. “The War was not their Measure; they had foretold it would be unsuccessful;” and in order to make their Words good, they had “resolv'd that unsuccessful it should be.” This Assertion alone contains a very high Charge of Perfidy, Humour and Weakness; tho' it is nothing to the Accusation brought against the B——rs in almost every Page.

I presume it is intended that this Charge (and so of the rest) should be receiv'd as true, or else it would not have been produc'd.—Upon what Foot then are we requir'd to give Credit to it?—Not from its Notoriety; not from any Kind of circumstantial Proof: Nothing of that sort is attempted to be given; not, I hope, as a self-evident Proposition.—The Whole

then, of its Credibility, rests upon the Testimony of the Assertor.—It rests intirely upon that; and this Testimony, being the only Evidence it is capable of, if it happens to be without that Evidence, it is then completely without any Evidence at all; and then it necessarily follows, that it cannot be assented to at all, but by such only, as, in the Depth of their Wisdom, take a Humour to assent without any Evidence.

Now the Validity of Testimony must be sought, and can only be found in the Personality of the Assertor; for it depends absolutely upon his personal Veracity, Disinterestedness, and Capacity; all these being indispensibly necessary to constitute a sufficient moral Evidence. But if the Personality of the Assertor be no where to be found, or does not appear, it would puzzle a Man, even tho' he should happen to be as cunning as our modern Politicians, to find out the requisite Conditions of a moral Evidence in a mere Non-entity; and such compleatly is a nameless unknown Assertor, as to any Degree of rational or moral Credibility which can be ascrib'd to him.

That which no Man affirms, is affirm'd by no Man, or is not affirm'd at all. If I inquire, who affirms the Truth of the above Charge against the two B——rs?—it can only be reply'd, the Book.—So that it unavoidably follows, either that every Assertion, which is printed, must necessarily be true; or else, that some other Criterion to distinguish between Truth and Imposture, in Matters of mere Assertion, must be fix'd, in which the personal Credit of the Assertor is no way concern'd. Since it is manifest, that not the least Shadow of Authority to the Assertion can be deriv'd from an unknown Assertor; and what that other Criterion may be, it would be kind, in any of these visionary Assertors, to point out.

And to just as little Purpose, that is, to no Purpose at all, are all those Professions of personal Patriotism, Independency, and public Spirit, with which these

these unknown Authors garnish their Performances. For however true such Professions may be, and whatever inward Comfort and Consolation the Reflection upon them may afford to great Minds, under the Adversity of Court Disgraces; yet they can only pass with the Reader as a mere Soliloquy; they can give no real Character to the Writer, as no real Life, Conduct and Manners appear; by the Correspondence, with which alone, the Propriety of such Professions can be made evident. If recourse cannot be had to actual Life and Manners, all such Professions are Words without any Application: Words without Application are Words without Meaning; and Words without Meaning come very little short of a Definition of Nonsense.

To sum up the Whole of this Argument: I must take leave to catechize some implicit Believer in Patriot Infallibility; upon what his tractable Faith, in the Charge against the two B——rs, is founded?

Whose Reputation is staked upon the Assertion, as a Security to the Public, that there is no Intention to mislead or misinform them?—No Body's.—Are any circumstantial Proofs produc'd in support of the Charge?—None.—Is the Assertor known to be disinterested?—No.—Is he known to be of sufficient Integrity?—No.—Does it appear that he has, from his Abilities and Situation, a competent Knowledge of the Fact he asserts?—No.—What then is the Amount of Evidence, upon which you ground your Assent?—It is printed in a Book.—And do you believe every thing which is asserted in a Book?—No.—How then do you distinguish what to receive and what to reject, where you have no other Evidence than this Book-assertion? That is no Evidence at all.—I believe what suits my Humour, and reject what does not.—Oh! but the Book in Question was wrote by a noble Lord.—And who says it was wrote by a noble Lord?—Every Body.—But who, pray, knows

it to be wrote by a noble Lord?—No Body.—So that upon the Whole, you believe you know not what, upon the Credit of you know not whom.—A very decent, a very rational and moral Account this, of Credibility and Assent. Let those, who think it no Reproach to their Understandings, to found Opinions upon such palpable Nonsense, give a better.—

And thus it happens, that, by a general Debasement of our Understandings, we submit to be directed by our political Guides of all Parties; for they manage all alike, and their Authority is founded in the blindest, most undiscerning Bigotry of the People, and in nothing else.

Such is the servile Credulity of this polite and inquisitive Age! in which, at one and the same Time, a certain Performance, call'd *An Examination of the Principles of the two B——rs*, met with Readers and Credit; and a numerous and well bred Assembly were gather'd together, to see a Man jump into a Quart-bottle! alike greatly inquisitive, of easy Credulity in both Instances; and the Spirit of Sense and Discernment may as well be collected from one Example as the other.

All Men of Art and Address, who have an Interest to manage, by influencing the Opinion of the People, know well, what soft and impressible Stuff the human Mind, in the Generality, is made of; and they stamp and impress accordingly, as best suits their Purpose.

If a Gentleman, or a Set of Gentlemen out of Power, or rather out of Place (for it is less the Honour than the Profit of serving their Country, that makes the Point aim'd at. “ ’Tis Avarice all! Ambition is no more”;) want to get into it, Application must be made to the Humour of the People. Some Degree of Popularity must be establish'd, in order to make them considerable enough, in the Eyes of State Ministers, to be worth their Purchase; and that is
very

very easy to come at : The popular Humour is well known ; Distrust of Ministers is uniformly on the Side of every Opposition : Let then a Clamour be rais'd about any Thing or Nothing ; the Danger of the Church, or the Pillage of the State ; *Hanover* Interest ; a War when there should be Peace, or a Peace when there should be War ; the popular Jealousy takes the Alarm, and when that perverse Humour sets in Judgment upon Men and Things, Suspicion will easily pass for Proof ; Actions, Motives and Designs, which stand barely within the Limits of Probability, will be deem'd incontestably ascertain'd ; till in the End, the Clamour rais'd by mock Patriotism is silenc'd by real Corruption ; and when that is effected, the People, who are ever the ready and easy Dupes of these Farces, are turn'd over to the next Man, who has any Occasion to make his Advantage of them.

I am very far from intending, by any thing I have said, to discourage a Spirit of Writing in Defence of Liberty ; it is of great Importance to a free People, to be incessantly animated to Watchfulness, against any Inroachments of Power upon their Freedom. And a Writer, appealing to well known Facts and Circumstances, or establishing such as are dubious, by sufficient circumstantial Evidence, is not under any Obligation to give his Name to the Public ; because his Reasoning, the Notoriety of the Fact he argues from, or the circumstantial Evidence he brings, to establish such as are dubious, may be presum'd to speak Conviction for themselves : But Decency, and much more Truth, must ever be strictly observ'd ; or Confusion, to the Destruction of Liberty, will insue.

Thus for Instance, a political Writer, who would shew the Impropriety of applying the Excise to any other Branches of the Revenue, has the well known Restraint and Inconvenience, which that Method of

collecting the Revenue brings upon the Subject, to appeal to. The Danger arising from any Extension may be shewn, &c. and the like general Openness of Examination holds in other Instances without Number.

The unconstrain'd Liberty of the Press makes an important Branch of the *British* Liberty ; but the notorious Abuse of that noble Privilege is a Reproach and Scandal to our very Language ; and could the defamatory Productions of our political Wits be suppos'd to reach Posterity, they would prove a Monument of Infamy to the present Times ; because they would go near to demonstrate, that Decency, Candour, Moderation and Truth, were Qualities unknown, at least unpractis'd, in this our Age.

Let any Man apply the Treatment of the first F——y in the K——m, by a nameless Incendiary, to himself and his own Family.—Let any Man consider, whether in any Family, Neighbourhood, or any larger Society, any Thing like Union, Confidence or Reputation could be preserv'd, were the same undermining and treacherous Attacks made upon their Characters, as are constantly practis'd, not barely uncensur'd, but even with Applause, upon all public Characters without Distinction :—Let any Man consider the Effect of these, not barely mean and unmanly, but even diabolical Artifices in lesser Instances, and from thence let him judge of their direful Effects in those, which are more important.

Let any Man reflect seriously upon these Practices, and their Consequences, in a dispassionate Hour, if he can, without Horror !

The more Importance the Charge brought against any Man is of to the Public, and the higher the Post and Dignity is, with which he may be invested, so much the more clear and indubitable ought the Evidence to be, upon which it is rested. And yet Charges of this Importance pass currently into Credit,

dit, without any Evidence at all.—Such is the Wisdom, such the Candour of the Times!

A Writer without Name is without Character; ever must be without any kind of rational Credibility, as to his Assertions; and if a general Infatuation in favour of Slander and Scurrility did not prevail, would be ever without Readers.—As a conceal'd Writer confesses himself either afraid or ashamed, openly and honestly to assert the Truth of his Report, the Reader ought to be much more ashamed to receive it.—Truth and Honesty fear not the Detection of Day-light; and those only, who have a sinister Purpose to serve, by misleading others into Darkness and Delusion, would chuse to envelop their Persons and Characters in skulking Obscurity.

Yet in general, these obscure and ignominious Assassins, at once of Reputation and Reason, are the Heads and Directors of Parties.—And the Suspicions, Distrust and Animosity, by them artfully infus'd with poignant and Patriot-spirited Declamation, have had Influence enough to raise Contentions, which it has cost the Public Millions to appease; and what is of more real Importance than all the Millions upon Earth, the Virtue, Reason and Integrity of the People, almost destroy'd in the Contest.

As in the morbid State of impair'd and declining Health, the peccant Humours form themselves into some malignant Tumour, which can neither be dissipated without Hazard, nor augmented without immediate Destruction; but the Preservation of this Languishment of Life depends upon the temperate Management of this unnatural Nuisance: So in the distemper'd State of the political Body, our public Credit, our national Debt corresponds with this unnatural Tumour. All our Excesses of ministerial Prodigality; all our Wars; our ministerial Wars, and our popular Wars; all the Luxury of *London*; the Riot, Venality, and Debauchery of Elections; Places, Pensions,

Pensions; the Pageantry of Courtiers, and the Mimickry of Patriotism: In a Word, all the malignant, fantastic, and pestilential Humours of the public center in this one Receptacle, this political Tumour! The Defluxions upon it from all Quarters have been Immense! Every Vein and Artery of it is furcharg'd; it is upon the Point to burst, and with its bursting, the Life of the State expires!

Corruption in the mean time, which makes a great Part of our Disease, opiates and benumbs all Sensibility of our Condition! and under these Circumstances, the political Life that is supported, is not, cannot be the Life of Reason and Vigour, but a Life only of Lethargy and Stupefaction!—This Distemper brought upon the public Constitution by Riot and Repletion, is only curable by Moderation and Temperance.

Ministers of State would do well to consider, that public Frugality, Œconomy, Restraint of Luxury, Abatement of the public Expences, which are in the present State of Things perhaps insupportable, are now become a Matter of Necessity.—That the Nation has long been spending upon the Principal; living upon its vital Strength; and that its vital Strength is almost exhausted.—That national Œconomy, in their public Capacity; that Reduction of Places, and Court Dependances, the Scandal of the Times, and that reviving in their private Characters those Examples of Integrity, Hospitality and Moderation, which made their Ancestors illustrious, would possibly, give them more true *English* Reputation and Popularity; more honest Weight with their Country, than all the Arts of Venality and Corruption can supply. That, when they have done this, they will have discharg'd their Duty to their Country; and that if the People will still be dup'd to their own Ruin, by the Artifices of Parties, their Ruin will be of themselves.

All Gentlemen of Rank and Fortune would do well to consider, that serving their Country is their highest Honour. That if they are out of Post of personal Employment, they may yet do their Country important Service by their Examples; by preserving the Virtue, Candour, Decency, Temper and Moderation of Gentlemen. That forming themselves into Parties, beside the infamous Drudgery and Debasement they must submit to; is, in Point of Interest, as weak; as it is infamous, in Point of Honour and Reputation. That if, after labouring thro' a Tract of dirty Ways, and by means, which every *Englishman* of Spirit ought to detest, they become possess'd of lucrative Employments, or the still more odious Dependances of sine-cure Places, where they receive Wages of the Public, without serving the Public, perhaps, in the Event for diserving the Public; what is the Amount of all, but a wicked, unprofitable Traffick? The Expences of what they call supporting an Interest and of Court Attendance, and a Town-life, are rarely ever balanc'd by the Value of any Place, or Annuity which they can obtain. For one Fortune that has been improv'd by these Practices, a Hundred have been ruin'd.—And what at last is the result even to the most successful, but spending upon their own Stock? While by these means the Expences of the Public vastly outrun its natural Income, which must end in its Ruin: Every Gentleman, who contributes to augment these Expences, is preying upon his own proper Fortune; is undermining the Foundation of his Honour and Estate; and making the Inheritance itself, at least the free Inheritance of both, precarious to his Posterity.

Above all, the People of *England*, the several Electors of Representatives throughout *Great Britain*, would do well to consider before it be too late, what is incumbent upon them. The free Constitution of their Country justly places them in the highest Point of Consideration and Importance. And whatever
others

others may be for their Rank, they are for their Numbers the most interested in preserving the Constitution and Liberty of their Country. And that which they are thus interested in preserving, they have very much in their Power to preserve; by resolutely and uniformly resisting, as well the open Corruption of one Party, as the more conceal'd and indirect Attacks of the other. Parties now differ not as Whig and Tory, but whatever Appellation they may assume, or reciprocally give each other, all the real Distinction is, that one of them is actually in Place and Power, and the other wants to be so. And they make their equally corrupt Applications accordingly. The one apply directly to the Venality of their Electors with Success; the other carry their Point by applying to their Jealousy, Suspicion, and their highly inflam'd, and irritated Passions. What the one compasses by Money, the other effects by Art. And unless a Spirit returns, which will invigorate the Electors to withstand manfully those Practices and Insinuations, by which Parties serve their own corrupt Purposes, by influencing and directing the Minds of the People; Virtue must every where give Place to Venality and Corruption; Reason and the Right of rational Information in Politicks, will be subdu'd by the blind of Bigottry of party Impositions; Truth and Integrity will be totally banish'd the *British* Nation; and Liberty will not be able to maintain its Ground without them.

The Return of Peace, as it once more puts it into our Power to save ourselves from Perdition, so it comes accompany'd with some very favourable Circumstances, if there is yet Virtue enough in Ministers, and Candour and Sense enough in the People to suffer them to take Effect.

The defeated Rebellion produc'd a full Proof of the just, and almost unexceptionable Attachment of all Kinds of People to the Person and Government of his Majesty; and as that Event must have intirely crush'd

crush'd the Hopes of the most threatening Party, so it has almost wholly silenc'd the Clamour of all.

The general good Temper and comparative Decency of the last general Election, is another favourable Symptom; the People manifestly discovering a Disposition to return once more to a sober Sense of Things.

The Peace itself, and the very quick Abatement of public Expences which follow'd upon it, cannot without an unjustifiable want of Candour, but pass for an Indication, that the Ministers are true to the public Trust, dispos'd to save their Country from Ruin: And this their open and manifest Conduct amounts to another Kind of presumptive Evidence of their Integrity, than the incoherent, incredible, and unsupported Charge of a scurrilous Pamphlet does, of the Baseness of any of them.

If on all sides this Temper be preserv'd, and prosecuted up to its highest good Effects, we stand just within a Degree of Possibility of being sav'd from speedy and compleat Perdition. But if we relapse again into Faction, the Scene will soon grow confus'd; Ministers, be they who they will, must combat Opposition with reiterated Corruption. Every Violence, Villainy and Madness, which we have seen committed, must be practis'd over again, and that with redoubled Ardour—Detested then by all true *Englishmen* be the Incendiary, that holds up the Firebrand of Parties!

The Gentlemen who compose the present Administration are, for ought appears to the contrary, as worthy of that high Trust, as any that could be found. They are possess'd of as large, or perhaps a larger Share of Property, in their private Fortunes, than ever was possess'd by any former Administration. They have very much at Stake, as private Subjects; and their Interest as Men, being inseparably connected with the Security of their Country, that Consideration gives the Public the strongest Assurance,

it

it perhaps can have, of their Integrity as Ministers — And if there are in the Ministry Gentlemen of all Party Denominations, it seems so much the more fortunate, as it may be a Means to blend and unite all Party Distinction, and extirpate those Contentions, which have for so long a Time prov'd the Bane of public Harmony, Virtue and Prosperity.

But were the present Set of Ministers, to a Man, dead, or out of Power, what I have said in general, that want of public Confidence in Ministers can only be supply'd by Corruption, &c. will eternally hold true; as it respects not the Persons of Ministers, but their civil or political Characters only.

The Writer of these Reflections may, perhaps, boast of a perfect Independency, as well of this as of any former Administration, with as much Truth, as any Man in the Kingdom. But he well apprehends the Force of his own Rule; a Writer without Name is without Character. A nameless Writer is to the Reader a mere Creature of the Imagination; and these Observations may come from a Lord, or a Lord's Footman; a disbanded Corporal, or a petty Officer in the Excise, for ought the Reader can know to the contrary. And therefore, what is advanc'd makes no Pretensions to be admitted any farther, than as it speaks Conviction for itself; and Truth is the same in its own Nature, and ought to be the same in its Effects, whether it comes from a Lord or a Beggar.

The civil Establishment of Power, by the *English* Constitution, is as perfect, or rather, has as few Imperfections, as any practicable Scheme of Government can have. And any notorious Attempt to violate this Constitution, could not be resisted and contended against by the People with too much Ardour. — But the Party Contentions, I think I may say in general, since the Revolution, have not had for their Object the Defence of the Constitution itself; but only the Posts of Administration, and who should occupy them. In these Disputes, perhaps, the People

ple are really much less interested, than they are made to believe by the crafty Insinuations of party Advocates; nor would these ever have Influence enough alone, to raise such violent and unnatural Commotions, if it were not for that execrable Train of Places and Dependances, which create a real Interest to Thousands, and at once invigorate the innumerable Possessors, and animate the expectant Opposers, in the Ardour of these Contentions.

Liberty is incompatible with continued Licentiousness and Corruption. Society cannot subsist without bringing the tumultuous and exorbitant Passions of Mankind under some Kind of Restriction. If all Mankind would voluntarily restrain their various Passions, by the Rules of Reason and Virtue, human Laws would be in a great Degree, if not altogether, unnecessary. But as that is unattainable, it becomes the proper Object of Laws to limit and circumscribe the several Exorbitances of natural Liberty, within the Bounds of social Order, Safety and Decorum. The less Restraint natural Liberty is brought under by any System of Laws, and the greater the Scope and Latitude is, which is allow'd to it; so much stronger are the Obligations, upon Individuals, of personal Restraint upon their disorderly and unsocial Passions: Or, in other Words, a State of Liberty, by abating the Restrictions of Power, supposes the prevailing Self-government of Virtue; for without that Auxiliary, Order is not supportable. And under a general Degeneracy of that Self-government, Liberty must languish, and in the End expire.

Thus the noble Privilege, which is allow'd by the *English* Laws to every Man, to publish freely his Sentiments to the World, supposes that the Virtues of Veracity, Candour, Decency, and Moderation, are so prevalent, that no Abuse will be made of it, so as to interrupt or destroy the Peace and Union of Society.

But the fatal Abuse of this inestimable Privilege, by the Degeneracy of those Vertues, has brought
upon

upon this Government Weaknesses of the most threatening Nature.

By the Abuse of this Privilege, personal Feuds and Animosities are rais'd and fomented in public Assemblies and Debates; where the coolest and most dispassionate Judgment, and the calmest and most candid Inquiry, is indispensibly necessary.

By the Abuse of this Privilege the People are taught to entertain continual Jealousy, Suspicion, and even Abhorrence of all public Characters whatever.

And as the Effect of this, the L—g—s—e itself appears to the People not with that Dignity, that the noblest constituted L—g—s—e in the World ought appear in. And this is speaking much within Bounds.

And as a Consequence of that fatally instigated Prejudice, the Laws themselves are so far from being held in universal Reverence and Veneration, that it passes but too generally for a want of Spirit, not to insult them; and a want of proper Dexterity, not to have cunning enough to evade them.

By these and such like Means are the Minds of the People set at Variance with that Government, which can only support itself, and them in a State of Liberty, by being firmly rooted in their Affiance and good Opinion.—All social Order is impair'd, if not ruin'd; and as it is the Office, so it should be the unremitted Endeavour, of genuin and disinterested Patriotism, to restore and reinstate it.

But if all Hopes to establish once more the public Spiritedness of our Ancestors; a Veneration of the Laws; a prevailing Love of our Country; and a general Practice of Virtue; are vain and chimerical; I then can only say, that all Expectations of the Constitution's remaining intire, and of our continuing to be a free People, are also vain and chimerical: For, let shallow Jesters, and jejune Reasoners, say what they will, Liberty is retainable upon no other Terms.



